

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS.

ILLUSTRATED.

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HER GRACE LILIAN DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Our Frontispiece: Her Grace Lillian Duchess of Marlborough's ...	609, 615
Labour on Farms ...	610
Country Notes ...	611
The Launch of the New Royal Yacht. (Illustrated) ...	613
A Northern Springtide ...	613
Polo Notes. (Illustrated) ...	614
On the Green ...	615
Famous Public Schools: Rugby. (Illustrated) ...	616
Cromwell at Basing House. (Illustrated) ...	618
Books of the Day ...	620
The Gentle Buster. (Illustrated) ...	621
Gardens Old and New: Deepdene. (Illustrated) ...	624
Training Spaniels (Illustrated) ...	629
In the Garden. (Illustrated) ...	631
Falconry: A Flight at a Lar. (Illustrated) ...	632
Observations of a Field Naturalist ...	634
Country Life on Board Ship—II. ...	635
Cycling Notes ...	636
In Town: "Why Smith Left Home" ...	637
Dramatic Notes ...	638
Literary Notes ...	638
Racing Notes ...	639
Shooting Gossip ...	639
Correspondence ...	640

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LABOUR ON FARMS.

MR. RIDER HAGGARD has turned farmer, and recently laid before the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce some of the difficulties which confront him in cultivating the respectable area of 370 acres of land. We are glad when a literary man takes to agriculture, because, unlike most agriculturists, he can always get a hearing, and the chances are that he puts what he has to say in a clear and businesslike manner.

We hope that Mr. Haggard is not dropping the ore of King Solomon's Mines into Norfolk furrows; in that case "back to the land" would carry a regrettable double meaning. But he complains bitterly that he simply cannot get the labour necessary for carrying on his farm, and that before long the supply now available will be even less. Nearly all the young men have left the villages. Of four ploughmen whom he employs, not one is under fifty, and two are between sixty and seventy. For more than a year he has endeavoured to find a young labourer to whom he could offer a cottage, and has been unable to do so. He added that during the twenty years from 1871 to 1891 one-tenth of the agricultural labourers of Norfolk left the land, and that since then the rate had been accelerated. To this Lord Walsingham adds his experiences on his large Norfolk property. "I have now," he writes, "seriously

to contemplate the prospect of allowing farms to go out of cultivation for want of hands to do the work. Better education makes every young man desire to wear a black coat. I send a lot of milk to London, and shall probably be obliged to milk the cows by machinery, for the men here dislike the job, and the women won't do it."

We do not doubt that the position of farmers in regard to labour is a difficult one; but it was as certain as rent day that any revival of agriculture would be accompanied by this trouble. In itself it is a symptom of better times, for one cause of the difficulty is that land is now being worked which had gone out of cultivation, and that there is more demand for labour. Considering the frightful set-back in the return from agriculture for twenty years, it is not so much matter for wonder that there was a migration of the people, but for thankfulness that such a migration was possible. Seventy years ago, in the disastrous fall of prices after the Great War, no such transference of labour was possible. The result was an appalling amount of suffering amongst the labourers, which aggravated the losses of capital. Those were the times when half the men in a parish were "on the rates," and when labourers were employed on parish pay to dig holes one day and fill them up the next. There were "congested districts," crowded workhouses, soup-kitchens, and all the concomitants of a dislocation of industry. We cannot even pretend to feel a grievance against the education which Lord Walsingham thinks has made people leave the land. Perhaps it has in some cases. But usually village schools do not carry children much beyond the "three R's," and it was just this indispensable and precious knowledge which made the obtaining of other work elsewhere possible. Their grandfathers, who could neither read nor write, would have been helpless. The result was that the rural labour of the best class did gradually go elsewhere. It went sometimes because there was no demand at all; sometimes because, where there was work, it was so ill-paid, owing to the drop in prices, that it was not a "living wage" in any sense. We do not use the term in any other sense than that of a sufficient provision for food and clothing. It was perfectly obvious that, with better prices, and more land under the plough, this labour would have to be called back. The difficulty of the next few years will be to do this, or else to find a substitute for it.

We very much doubt whether good farm labourers will ever be attracted back to the land on the old terms. It seems to us impossible. Mr. Haggard is quite right in saying that what "the workman" wants—we rather dislike the word "labourer" in this sense, as it suggests a class by itself—is cash. He is not in the least attracted by low rents, and only a little by gardens or allotments. He wants a good weekly wage, and money in his hand. If he can earn a sovereign elsewhere, with a chance of more, he will go elsewhere. Certainly he will not stay on the land and work for 12s. a week. One of the greatest difficulties in this business is the difference between the output of workmen on the farms. Where their physique is good and they work with a will the men may be actually worth £1 a week. Where the physique is bad and the morale low, men may really be dear at 12s.; and then there comes the fatal objection that the good man is nearly always lumped with the bad, and gets the same low wage. There is just one chance of keeping good men or attracting others in districts where the owners are offering small farms to workmen who have saved a little money. It is a good opening, and success has been very rapid in a great number of instances. But the places where this has been done, or is possible, are not numerous. As a rule, the old division of master and man has to continue. Either then the masters must make their business so profitable that they can afford to pay their men from 18s. to £1 per week, with low rents for cottages, or they must rely on inferior labour, and often be left stranded with none. We hope they may be able to raise wages, but we very much doubt it. In that case one of two things will happen, either land will go back to pasture again, as Lord Walsingham fears—for whatever amount of stock is kept, the labour required is greatly less than in arable farming—or we shall have to use machinery on a larger scale and of a more varied quality than at present. Of one thing we are certain—English machinery of all kinds is ridiculously dear. Our makers never seem to have been able to learn the lesson of making it cheaply. From a watch to a warship, it is all extravagantly expensive. When a perfectly good gun-metal stop-watch, as good as can be wanted, can be made in America, and sold for less than a sovereign, it is nonsense to quote the prices for quite simple agricultural machinery now ruling. It is the story of the Atbara bridge and American locomotives over again. With cheap interchangeable machinery, nearly all agricultural work could be done by this means by a few well-paid labourers on each farm. It is not a pleasant prospect for the old village industries. The local wheelwrights, smiths, thatchers, and the like can scarcely hope to hold their own; their work will either not be done at all, or done by the skilled and well-paid artisans on the farms. It must be remembered that there is another great economic change

which may become general on the large occupations. On these, two partners are economically indispensable. These are the owner and the labourer. At present we have the third partner, the tenant farmer, who exists because the owner finds it rather suits his convenience to sacrifice a part of the earnings of land in order to avoid the trouble of cultivating it, or because he can employ his activities more profitably in other business. Any diminution of the personal supervision of labour and substitution of machinery immensely lessens the trouble of personal management, and offers a corresponding inducement to the proprietor to farm his land himself. With only two profits to share, there is a better chance for the workman to receive the higher wage; and it is not difficult to see that the capitalist, which the farmer always is, will employ his funds in some other way. The hardship, and hardship is always involved in all these changes, falls naturally on those who have to make the change late in life.

In stock-keeping and on pasture-land the case is different. What causes the present difficulty is the withdrawal of the labour engaged in looking after the beasts to send them on to the land. We believe that, properly managed, all stock-keeping that is worth doing at all can leave a profit large enough to pay a good wage to the men. To leave well-bred animals—and none but such animals should be kept in this country—in the hands of an under-paid and presumably incompetent person, is not business. But in this direction, as in arable farming, the tendency is to pay higher wages for a good class of labour, and, though it will take time, we are convinced that this is the only remedy; which means that economies must be sought elsewhere than in individual wages.



WE hope that members of Parliament interested in the land question generally will keep an eye on the working of the Irish Land Acts in congested districts. For instance, at the present moment the enormous estates of Lord Dillon in Mayo and Roscommon are, it is stated, in course of purchase by the State. They comprise 90,000 acres, with a rental of £20,000 a year, and a tenantry of 4,000 persons. We should like to know whether such a gigantic experiment in the State ownership of land would pass, literally without comment, if it were tried in England. We are not saying anything against it. But we do think very strongly that before this is done the Irish Government ought to furnish the clearest data as to the results of previous experiments in the direction of State landlordism in Ireland.

We should like to know, for instance, two or three cases in which it has been done already, and to see a clear statement of accounts, and a proper agent's balance-sheet. This would be very instructive to land-owners, while the country also has a right to know, when it lends money, what return it is getting. We suggest that the following questions should be asked in Parliament: (1) At what rate the purchase-money was obtained, and at what interest it was lent; (2) Whether the State tenants pay their rent; (3) Whether the instalments for repayment are in arrears (we believe that in most cases the rent is so arranged as to cover the instalments); (4) What is the exact balance either of profit or loss to the country. If there is a balance of profit, it is of the highest importance to the landed interest to know how this accrues. If from rents, then State ownership is either unnecessary, or is more successful than private property. If there is a loss, we should like to know the amount of the loss, and what is the "set-off." There is a third possibility. The owners may be driven to part with their estates under their real value. In any case we ought to know how the experiment works.

The enormous financial loss when a large racing yacht is sold was well shown at the recent sale at Billiter Street. The Irex, winner of scores of classic races, in thorough repair, only

realised £1,100. The Formosa, a 102-tonner, built by a crack maker in 1878, with 65 tons of lead ballast, sold for the same price. The Irex was only built in 1884, and is for all practical purposes as good as when she was launched. The ten year old Red Eagle, a 305-ton steam yacht, fetched £5,800; but a 53-ton schooner only realised £420. It will be noticed that the steam yacht fetched about £1,800 more than a first-class steam trawler. We doubt if when launched ten years ago she cost a penny less than £12,000. This would give the annual deterioration at about £600, which sum must be added to the cost of up-keep. This, be it noted, in a vessel not designed as a racing boat. The latter are "cut out" after a season or two by some new improvement, and the fancy price at once drops to something far below the intrinsic value of the vessel.

As a contrast to the rapid decline in the value of yachts, and their transitory existence generally, comes the story of the astonishing "vitality" of the modern steel cargo steamers. It has for some time been evident that the steel steamer, well found, and built in water-tight compartments, ought to be unsinkable if her *side* is not ripped, or the skin of her bottom torn off several compartments at once. But the following instance is, we think, unique. The Milwaukee, one of the larger cargo ships afloat, ran ashore last autumn on the Scours of Cruden, off the coast of Aberdeen. Through her middle there stuck up a rock 5ft. high. But the owners resolved to save all that part aft of the main hatch by cutting the ship in two with dynamite explosives, and then navigating the after part, which really made a separate ship, cut off from the fore part by her water-tight bulkhead; and they actually did this. The ship was cut in two by small explosions, and the after part, with all the costly engines and machinery, "dropped off," and was towed into the Tyne, leaving 160ft. of the forward part on the rocks. Then, like a huge crustacean, the vessel "grew" a new fore part, and the reconstructed monster has just been launched once more.

There is to be a special class of Suffolk punches among the cart-horses shown at the parade on Whit-Monday. We welcome this addition with interest. At present the heavy draught horses in London are nearly all either Shires or Clydesdales, the former being used in the proportion of nine out of ten at least. The Suffolk horse is of undeniable quality, and, if not yet so large as the Shires, can soon be brought up to the size needed. He is a bright chestnut as a rule, very intelligent and docile, and fast for a draught horse. He walks quickly and lightly, and does not knock himself about so much as the heavier breeds, though he can do as good a day's work. The Suffolks were bred originally for work on the very heavy clays of that county. The nature of the soil not only renders ploughing very difficult, but makes it necessary to have heavy waggons to stand the wear and tear. Hence the good horses.

If the members of the Peace Conference gathered at the Hague desire rest and refreshment from their deliberations, they will find charming variety of country life close by. In May, Holland is at its very best. If they like to run down to Haarlem, and on to Katwyk, they can see hundreds of acres of tulips, and the mouth of the "old Rhine." Everywhere as one runs along the line, raised just above the polders, one sees hundreds of redshanks, oyster-catchers, mallards, and sometimes a stork feeding on the wet meadows. The cows, which have spent the winter indoors, are out in the meadows, and the barges are taken along the canals, and the cows milked in the fields by the side of the boats into huge polished brass churns. In one tree near the Hague is a stork's nest, and there are plenty of heronries, some where the birds build, like rooks, quite near houses.

In the dunes from Schevening northwards are most delightful walks, in some of the wildest and most solitary country in South Holland. There you see the beautiful dwarf vegetation of the sand-hills, and any number of birds on the fringe where the dunes join the cultivated land. There are plover, oyster-catchers, magpies, cuckoos, pheasants, nightingales, whinchats, and many rare warblers. Whether it be sand, marsh, or water, the Dutch may be trusted always to make the best of what they possess.

A curious little episode might have been noticed by anyone passing the Earl's Court Exhibition at the psychological moment when three of the coloured gentlemen, presumably figuring as savage Africans, came out and happened to meet an Italian boy with his monkey. The delight of the Africans at the sight of the monkey was amusing and almost touching to see, and what was yet more curious was that the monkey seemed to recognise them as compatriots, and to share a good deal of their pleasure. There was one of these men in particular for whom the monkey seemed to conceive a special liking, sitting on his shoulder, and snooding his hairy head against the black cheek with the supremest

satisfaction. Quite a little crowd soon gathered to watch the small comedy, and the monkey was not altogether pleased when he was ultimately restored to his legitimate owner.

British birds, like human Britons, seem to have a happy knack of making themselves at home in any quarter of the globe that they have a chance of colonising. Mr. Littler has lately contributed an interesting article under this head to *Science Gossip*, with special reference to the imported British birds in Tasmania. Of course it is the English sparrow that is most aggressive and most execrated. The theory seems to be that he was imported by mistake for the hedge-sparrow—singular and fatal error. Starlings abound, and, as with us, are most useful eaters of insects, but terrible marauders of the fruit trees. And the skylark flourishes and sings. Now the American people, and especially the Southerners, have a great affection, by hearsay, for the skylark's song. They love to read Wordsworth on the skylark. Why do they not try the experiment that has been so successful in Tasmania, and import some of our skylarks? They might then be inclined to forgive us in some measure for the misdeeds of the sparrows.

Evidence of the increase of birds formerly quite rare near London comes from every side. In Richmond Park, for instance, Penn Ponds hold more water-fowl than have been seen there for twenty years. There were counted on the upper pond at one time recently five broods of wild ducks, the largest numbering eleven ducklings, two pairs of dabchicks (on the lower pond), and nearly twenty water-hens out on the open water. Besides these there were two pairs of coots. As coots are very shy birds, and, unlike the water-hen, dislike human society, their return is somewhat remarkable. Green woodpeckers are numerous, and the herons have had a good hatch. One of these was fishing on Chiswick Eyot as early as 7.45 one evening last week. A pair of kingfishers have again nested in the grounds of Chiswick House, and a pair of golden eyes have arrived on the lake. These are, doubtless, tame birds which have come from elsewhere.

Mr. Coryton, Master of Foxhounds, is to be congratulated upon the success with which foxes are protected in part, at any rate, of his country. The other day the discovery was made that a vixen had given birth to a fine litter of cubs in one of the Master's own barns at Hawkley, near Petersfield, Hampshire. When the cub-hunting season comes round, there will be an opportunity of drawing a "home covert" with a vengeance. Meanwhile the farm hands will, we trust, "walk" the cubs with care.

We cherish our old customs with a zeal which is usually proportionate to their inutility; and when a City cotton merchant vehemently objects to a tag-rag-and-bobtail procession "beating the bounds" through the middle of his warehouse in the busiest time of the day, every Londoner is on the side of the procession. So at Whitby everyone would have been personally aggrieved if the Lords of Uggelbarnby and Sneaton had not, on the day before Ascension Day, fulfilled their annual penance of setting the Horngarth on Penny Hedge. Some ancestors of these lords are said to have killed an abbot who tried to prevent them killing a boar in the reign of Henry II. Why the abbot should have wished to spoil sport is not stated; but unless a certain number of stakes are fixed annually on Horngarth Day by the descendants of the noble boar-hunters at the side of the Esk, the country-folk believe that their estates will pass to the Church. Lawyers may entertain a different belief; nevertheless, the stakes were duly fixed last week, as they have been every year since local records existed.

A bad case of trout-poisoning is reported from the river Wye, one of the tributaries of the Thames, which comes down from the Buckinghamshire hills, past Wycombe. Fifty fine trout were found dead in one reach. It is worth remembering (1) That the owner of the fishery can always sue with a certainty of obtaining damages; (2) That it is now illegal to pollute any tributary of the Thames. Whether the latter applies to other than sewage pollution remains to be tested by law.

The results of the salmon-marking experiments conducted under the superintendence of Herr A. Landmark, the Norwegian Government Inspector of Fisheries, during the years 1895 and 1896, have been recently published in Christiania, and a number of interesting facts have consequently been made known. Altogether sixty-four salmon and four sea-trout out of the number marked were recaptured, and this quantity would have been considerably increased but for the stupidity of many of the coast netmen, whose impression was that the experiments were being made for the purpose of injuring their interests. Of the sixty-four salmon more than half—thirty-four, to be precise—were recaptured within six months, eleven between this time

and twelve months, and the remainder between one and two years after marking, the last fish being captured a little more than a month before the two years had passed. Between the release and recapture of a number only a short period elapsed, but of the others it is shown that those salmon retaken in rivers, that had the opportunity of completing a year's growth, on an average increased in weight at the rate of 45.7 per cent., whilst those who completed two years' growth averaged an increase of 53.1 per cent. Unfortunately, the items which go to produce these averages vary very considerably. Leaving out one fish which showed a decrease in weight of 7 per cent. in the first-named class, the increases range from 13.2 to 90 per cent., and in the second from 28.6 to 109 per cent. Of the sea-captured salmon the variation is equally marked, the greatest difference being in the case of a fish, retaken after an interval of eighteen and three-quarter months, which showed an increase of 279.6 per cent.

To one of the other features brought to light by these interesting experiments we will refer briefly, and this is that in them the homing proclivities of the salmon have received additional proof. Of the forty-nine fish marked in Sire-aen, no less than thirty-six were retaken in the same river. Of the remainder, three were captured in a neighbouring stream, and ten in the sea. Other equally interesting facts have been made known, and altogether the salmon-marking experiments have produced highly-satisfactory results.

First-class cricket has begun with a sensation. The defeat of Australia by Essex was one of the most sporting events seen on any cricket ground during recent years. Everyone knew that, contrary to what usually happens when a Saturday is the third day of a match and is devoted to the working out of a foregone conclusion, there would be as exciting a day's play as can be counted upon. But when Gregory was bowled, with the score at 18 for three wickets, the excitement became intense. Essex, for the time, was "all England" in popular estimation, and every ball was watched in dead silence, as Young plied the batsmen with ball after ball of admirable pitch and infinite cunning. Fast, tricky, and dead on the wicket, the picked players of Australia could do little with him. Six wickets fell for 55 runs, and by 1.30 the game was over. But what shall be said of the revenge taken by Howell at the Oval? All ten wickets secured for 28 runs is not only a record, but a feat which deserved and received applause from Australians and Englishmen alike.

A rose grower of Kezanlik, the Valley of Roses, in Bulgaria, is reported to have grown an azure blue rose. Blue is by no means a common flower colour, and though *tours de force* in flower colouring produced by artificial selection are not generally admirable, this blue rose should be a thing of beauty, and its novelty alone is sure to commend it.

Sixteen millions of pounds paid to foreigners and the colonies for butter! That is the bill, and, as the *Morning Post* correspondent, in the second of his useful articles on the revival of agriculture, says, it seems that something is wrong. Part of the difficulty lies in the nice discernment of the town populations which buy butter. The people who buy high-priced butter want it to be good and fresh, and also they want it always to be of first-class quality and uniform. Part of this quality is due to the way the butter is made; but it also depends on whether the cows are eating fresh grass or are living on mangold and cake. What the butter consumer wants to produce the article he likes, is everlasting spring weather, and he gets it for half the year by "following the sun." First the Western English counties yield their share with Normandy and Brittany. Then comes the turn of the more Northern Danish butters. Summer butter is nearly as good, and when winter stops the growth of grass then comes the turn of the Australian butter, fed on grass in the Australian spring, which is our winter. We do not see how we can compete with this during the months when there is no grass here, though in the spring and summer much might be done to improve our quality and yield.

Fieldfares lingering on in England into the middle of May are evidence enough, if our senses did not attest it, to the untimely coldness of the present spring. To see these birds in company with swallows and cuckoos is no common sight. But the poor birds may be pardoned for not fully understanding the recent caprices of our climate.

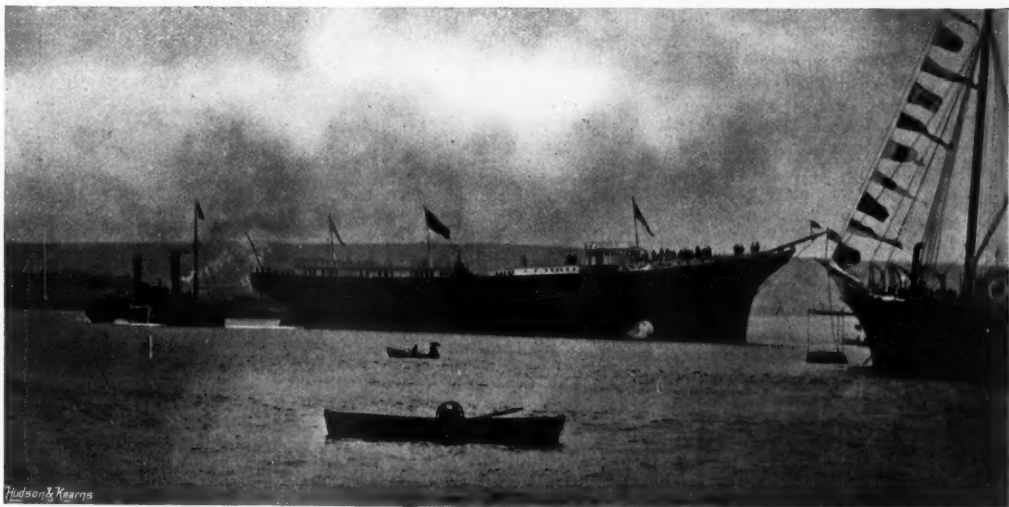
Something doing with the trout, but very little with the salmon, is the common verdict all the country over. Proprietors on the Test are showing a proper and kindly sense of their duty towards their neighbours by getting the weeds cut in due season. There is still a conspicuous absence of fly on most waters. It will be especially interesting, under the circumstances, to see what the hatch-out of May-fly will be.

The Launch of the New Royal Yacht.

PEMBROKE DOCK was *en fête* last week, when the Duchess of York and the Duke of Connaught visited the town for the purpose of christening and launching the new Royal yacht in the name of Her Majesty. The enthusiasm of the loyal Welsh people, who travelled to the dockyard town from near and far, was unbounded, and, indeed, the only regretful note in the whole of the proceedings was struck by the absence of the Sailor Prince, whose presence had been eagerly looked for, but whose indisposition prevented him taking part in the ceremony. When it is remembered that accommodation for many thousands of spectators had to be arranged, it will be seen that the labour of providing for these and for the launch itself was no light task. Captain Burgess Watson, the Naval Superintendent of the Dockyard, who was mainly responsible for the successful preparations that were made, deserves commendation, for during no part of the proceedings did the slightest hitch occur.

The appearance of the Royal party, which was heralded by a salute of twenty-one guns, gave the signal for a tremendous outburst of cheering, and throughout the whole of the afternoon the same spirit of loyalty was manifested. Round the bows of the new ship was grouped a great gathering of distinguished guests, and the whole scene was brilliant in the extreme. When the noise made by the shipwrights, who were busily engaged releasing the last shores, had ceased, Her Royal Highness stepped forward to perform the christening ceremony. After the Duchess had broken the bottle of wine and had wished "Success to the Victoria and Albert and all who sailed in her," the usual service was read. Two golden nails were then driven into the hull by Her Royal Highness, who afterwards severed the silken cords that held the shapely yacht, which instantly slid into the waters of Milford Haven, while the band played "Rule, Britannia!" and "God Save the Queen."

It has been the privilege of the Welsh people to send out from the Pembroke yards two other Royal yachts bearing the name of the Victoria and Albert. The first, a steam paddle ship designed by Sir W. Symonds, was built fifty-six years ago. After about twelve years' service she was renamed the Osborne, and remained afloat for a further period of thirteen years. The second Victoria and Albert, which the newly-launched ship will succeed when she is made ready for sea, was sent out from the



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SAFELY LAUNCHED.

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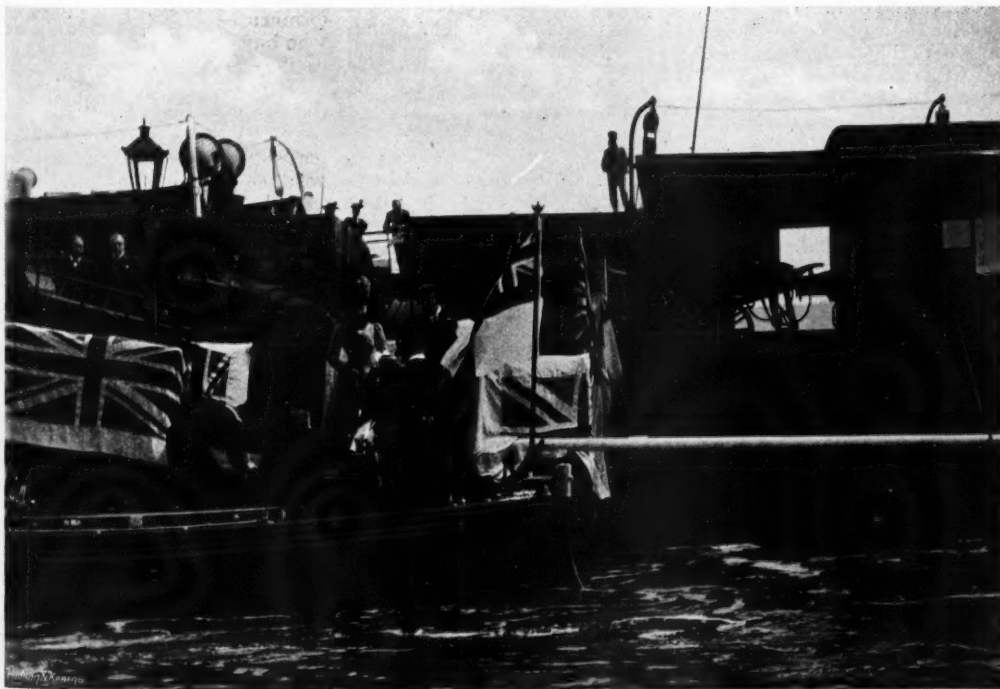
same yard in January, 1855, and has done good service for these many years since. The newest Royal yacht, although smaller, and, in offensive and defensive respects, inferior to those of other Sovereigns, is larger and far superior to her predecessors. Constructed of steel, in place of wood, of which the older ships were built, she has the benefit of all the skill of modern naval science, and her designer, the Director of Naval Construction, is deserving of all credit for the splendid ship the new Victoria and Albert promises to be.

A Northern Springtide.

IN the South the trees are mostly in leaf by now, but here in the North our summer comes more slowly, and as yet the earth is only faintly green, and the birches, the maiden-hair fern among trees, have not put on their gossamer mantles. Last night was very stormy, and the wind blustered and raved, and the rain beat incessantly against the windows, almost as though the dreary winter were once more at hand. But this morning peace reigned again; it was sunny and quite warm, and I went forth with a rejoicing heart to see if spring were born.

A chorus of sweet linnets filled the air with blithe some music, while the mavis poured forth her gushing notes, and the tortoise-shell and brimstone butterflies floated softly through the air. A soft sheen of budding colour has changed the face of the brown earth, and little wet ferns are slowly uncurling everywhere. It will come so suddenly, and yet so imperceptibly, the fulness of the springtime, that I shall hardly be able to date its coming.

A dreary and apparently barren garden one day, and a short time later a carpet of flowers. My garden blooms as buds open—so mysteriously that one can never actually see them do so, not even the tulips, that spread so widely and quickly in the sun, yet never seem to move a hair's breadth so long as you watch them. I hope I shall not have to go away from home this month. I hardly like to go into the house, for fear I miss something, there is so much to see and watch. Truly the young flowers are born in pain and travail, for only yesterday it rained heavily again, and rained and rained all day, and the wind sighed its lament in my chimney, and beat down the opening flowers until I felt quite disheartened; but this morning just under my window I found some open



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H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF YORK DEPARTS.

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daffodils and narcissus buds, and the sun smiled on them and the fresh breeze caressed them, and I knew that with the return of the daffodils my spring was coming at last. The solitary snow-drops have long since faded. How lovely they were when they first came out, a white blossom here and there, "born of the breath of winter," and growing alone, as it were, in a stainless isolation. How fragile they looked, yet how hardy they were, surviving storms that tear up the great trees but leave them unbroken.

The leaves of the coltsfoot are out now; the yellow flowers were out last month. The coltsfoot is a curious little plant, whose leaves are green above and whitish underneath, and the Highlanders often use the silky down of the seed-heads for stuffing their pillows and cushions. This morning as I wandered about the slowly awakening garden, I felt a sudden sense of exaltation at the thought of the approaching summer, and a thrill of hope and joy as I listened to the music of the happy birds and the continual murmur of the distant river. May is the month of joy, and a lusty triumph filled the hearts of the birds, whose paean of pleasure rang out in one grand harmony, the keynote of which was love.

The early butterflies softly kissed the opening flower-buds, and the south wind wooed the violets, while the turtle-doves repeated their love story with sentimental insistence, and even the fierce hawk grew tender towards his amorous mate. In the farmyard the roosters strutted proudly from one favourite to another, while the sparrows loved and twittered incessantly. In the meadows the young lambs born some six weeks ago were frisking gaily about. Insects were momentarily born in every sunny corner, swollen buds burst open after soft rain showers, and the whole air was full of promise and pregnant with new life.

Without knowing why, I felt happy, unreasonably happy and irresponsibly happy, as I wandered from wood to garden and back to wood again. The truest happiness is always negative, I think, and the very essence of joy is to be unconscious of its cause—to be glad, triumphantly glad, simply because it is a sunny morning and because the spring flowers are out at last. To know the cause of one's joy is to feel a happiness that is shadowed by anxiety. One fears to lose a new-found treasure, but I fear to lose nothing, for I know not what I possess to-day nor what I shall possess to-morrow. I only know that when the daffodils die the roses will bloom, and that the rich scent of the lilies will replace the delicate perfume of the white violets, and I am happy because shy young flowers are opening every day and because a forward rose-bud will soon be peeping gaily at me over the wall, and

"Through every fibre of my brain,
Through every nerve, through every vein,
I feel the electric thrill, the touch,
Of life that seems almost too much."

Everything seems so young to-day. I saw a "baby-toad" just now in one of the empty strawberry beds; she is the first I have seen this year. As I crossed the field a very young rabbit sat up and stared at me in timid astonishment, and then disappeared as though by magic. The busy birds flew here and there, holding feathers or straw in their beaks—the spoil from some distant farmyards—while a cautious lapwing ran screaming from me and then stopped and fluttered her wings as though in distress, a mother's ruse to distract my attention from her newly-made nest. I hope we shall not have any more frosts now; they would nip the bursting buds. The dandelions are running a golden riot and the scentless dog-violets are beginning to spread their faint blue mantle over the hillside. The wild hyacinths, those real "bluebells of Scotland," will soon carpet the wood with a perfect wealth of flowers, a glad blue, born perchance in a blurring rain.

I saw a ground beetle patiently cleaning himself in the path just now, and myriads of gnats rejoicing in a sunny corner. Fat trout lie hidden under the stones in the river, and in the shallow pools the pugnacious stickle-backs are fighting vigorously. The

hawthorn branches are only faintly coloured as yet, and the almond tree is not quite out, so that I have still much to look forward to. A shy jay's harsh note sounded quite suddenly out of the wood just now, but was instantly drowned by a chorus of thrushes and chaffinches.

Misty clouds, at the mercy of every wayward breeze, hover between sky and earth, sometimes falling in a refreshing shower, and then regathering and floating on amidst a somewhat watery sunshine. The building house-martins are very happy in the security of the thick glossy ivy. My garden is full of wrens. I never saw so many as there are this year. I love the little wren, for he sings all the year round, except during a severe frost, and is like the cheery gorse that is ever in bloom. The cinerarias are still flowering luxuriantly in the greenhouse, and so is the pure white cyclamen, but the primulas are over. Little bits of twig and straw keep falling from the toolhouse roof with a soft rattle and clatter on to that of the greenhouse, and the maidenhair ferns are uncurling from their tight mass of brown fronds. Outside my greenhouse the birds are busy hunting for insects among the grasses that grow at the edge of the summer-house roof. The boys about here sometimes hang nets at night over the sides of the hedges to catch the birds. I am always very angry if I find one, and am thankful that at least they do not often catch the starlings, because they fly out at the top of the hedges. I met a lad just now carrying a hat half-filled with partridges' eggs; he said he thought they were plovers', or peewits' as he called them. I made him come back with me and replace them wherever I could find a nest, and promised him a sound thrashing if I caught him taking any more. He was only a small laddie, and he burst into tears and sobs of terror, but a thrush in an elm tree close by applauded me loudly.

Every day I find fresh beauties in the garden. The larches have put on their gauzy veil of green at last, and show in bright contrast to the bare trees around them. The scillas are all in bloom, and the almond tree is out this morning. It seems to have come out all at once, or was I so dull yesterday that I failed to notice its dawning blushes? Its rosy blossoms seem like some bright harbinger of tender fulness of colour to come. My garden is just now full of delicate and varied greens. It is the predominant colour now the trees are in leaf, for even the tardy ash is beginning to bud, and a green veil of half-blown leaves lies over those forest virgins the birches. The birds chatter continuously, and the linnets come again and again to the elms to sing their happy songs, while the chaffinches scream a playful defiance from the hazel copse beyond.

The sparrows are quarrelling, as usual, and from time to time the wood-pigeons wheel their swift flight over my head, from river to wood, from wood to river; how busy they all are, and what a drone I feel. The bees are hovering over the top of my garden wall, which is a brilliant mass of wallflower. I wonder what chance wind or bird carried the seed so high. In the lanes the hedges will soon be covered with white and rosy buds, the rich colour of the marsh marigold will line the river bank. The wood is already carpeted with delicate red anemones or wind-flowers, and the meadow and garden are full of bloom and birds. Ah! There, that was surely a cuckoo calling; my heart throbbed violently as I listened. I always feel that the very fulness of spring comes with the cuckoo's note, and again and again as I listen, an undefined longing comes into my heart, and the glad tears spring involuntarily to my eyes as I murmur softly to myself "The God of Nature is my secret guide."

R. NEISH

POLO NOTES.

AT last the London polo season seems to have got into its stride, and the reappearance of the Messrs. Miller at Ranelagh has set the ball rolling in characteristic fashion at the Barn Elms Club. On Monday week the Handicap Tournament opened, and three ties were played off; on Wednesday week B Team, consisting of Messrs. Drabble, Leslie Wilson, Tresham Gilbey, and Lord Shrewsbury, just beat D Team, made up of Messrs. Eyre Lloyd, Menzies, Hudson, and Ezra. This was a capital game, both sides having scored three goals at the end of the last period, and it was only during an extra period that B Team scored again and won the match. The conclusion of the handicap was seen on Saturday, when B and F Teams met to decide issues. The latter team was composed of Lord Kensington, Captain U. O. Thynne, Mr. Glynne Williams, with Mr. H. Spender Clay as back. After some interesting play, the B Team proved victorious by seven goals to two. In the second match of the afternoon, between the 13th Hussars and a Warwickshire Hunt team, some da-hing play was witnessed, Captain



W. A. Rouch.

INTERESTING PLAY.

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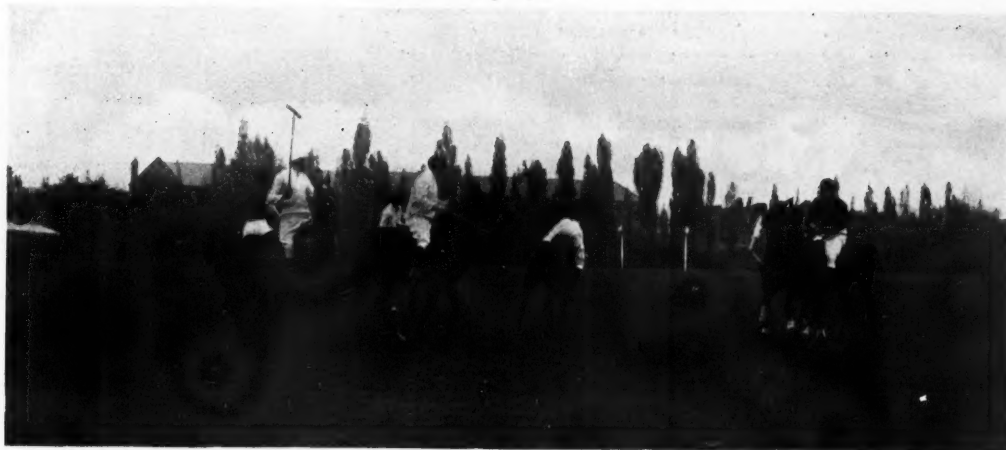
Maclaren for the soldiers shining conspicuously. In the end the Hunt team won by seven goals against their opponents' three.

At Hurlingham on Monday week an Orleans Club team, consisting of Messrs. W. McCreery, F. Menzies, F. Freake, and L. McCreery, were opposed by Lord Harrington, Captain Jenner, Captain Renton, and Mr. W. Buckmaster, representing the home club. These were two very high-class teams, and a capital match resulted in the victory of the invaders by a single point. In curious weather a couple of good matches were played on Saturday. The first was between a home team and the Royal Horse Guards. Hurlingham was represented by Mr. W. Jones, Mr. Godfrey Heseltine, Mr. L. McCreery, and Mr. John Watson (back); whilst for the Guards, the Duke of Roxburgh, the Marquess of Waterford, Captain Drage, and the Hon. Dudley Marjoribanks (back) did duty. Towards the close play was very fast and furious, but the soldiers, who forced matters considerably, were only able to equalise matter, and the result stood at three goals "all." The second match was between a home team and the 7th Hussars, and the onlookers were rewarded by seeing some very lively play. During the first half, neither side was able to register an advantage, but after half-time the home team managed to place the only two goals scored to their credit. The Hurlingham team was composed of Mr. W. McCreery, Captain Renton, Mr. W. Buckmaster, and Mr. E. B. Sheppard (back). For the soldiers, Captain R. G. Brooke, Major Haig, Major Carew, and Captain the Hon. J. Beresford (back) formed the opposition.

Not having had time to pay another visit to the Wimbledon ground last week, I cannot write of what has been going on there, and the new club at the Crystal Palace is not to be opened until the 22nd inst. When all these four, Hurlingham, Ranelagh, Wimbledon Park, and the London Polo Club, are in full swing, those whose business, or pleasure, it is to attend polo matches will be kept hard at work. I hear of yet another metropolitan polo club likely to be opened next season at Wembley Park, and also a very good account of the Inniskilling Dragoons' team, which is this year hitting as hard and straight as ever. Mr. Neil Haig is said to be on his way home from Australia to take his place as No. 3 in the team, and there is every indication that the Dragoons may look forward to a highly-successful season. The County Cup new rules have met with general approval, and it is expected that some twenty clubs will enter for this competition.



THERE has been a sort of lull—a calm after a storm—in golfing affairs, masculine. The competition for the St. Andrews spring medal being a thing of the past, and the amateur championship competition not yet quite upon us, the focus of interest has changed to the doings of the ladies on the links of Newcastle, County Down. The average golfer is not aware of the beauty and excellence of many of these Irish greens. Portrush itself is beautiful; Newcastle has not so fine a sea-coast, but the mountain scenery is very grand, and the bunkers are on the scale of Sandwich. It is real earnest golf. It is no part of our duty here to retell the tale of the final triumph of Miss Hezlet over her compatriot, Miss Magill, but it may be specially noted that Miss Dod, who did so excellently well, is the lady who was amateur lawn tennis champion and also an international hockey player. Such merits entitle this lady to rank with the Ottaways, the Frys, the Alfred Lytteltons, and the rest of the men who seem able to do any athletic feat requiring the harmonious working of hand and eye. There are many things to regret about our lady championships. We regret that Lady Margaret Scott no longer enters the field, and that the Misses Orr in particular, and the large class of good Scottish golfing ladies in general, do not compete more often. But the fields continue large, and the matches are well fought nevertheless; and an item of interest that we look forward to is suggested by the rumoured visit to this country of Miss Beatrix Hoyt, thrice champion lady golfer of the United States. It is wonderful how the view of the typical male golfer has changed towards all this matter of ladies on the links. A glance at the first edition of the Badminton book will



W. A. Rouch.

IN THE CENTRE OF THE GROUND.

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QUICK TURNING.

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show how jealously man regarded the advent of the other sex to the green. It is the ladies themselves who have worked their way by their prowess to an equality with many a male golfer who has the most profound respect for his game, and in earnestness and knowledge of the game they are generally man's superior.

Many of the clubs in the South will be not a little disappointed at the decision reached by the Rules of Golf Committee not to submit their rules finally for confirmation until the Royal and Ancient Club's autumn meeting. So many have been waiting in anxious patience for the result of the committee's labours. But the truth is that since the committee published their draft of the rules they have been inundated with suggestions, some of which, no doubt, are valuable. The committee have recognised their value, and desire now to receive all the suggestions that may be forthcoming up to the end of June, after which date no more alterations can be considered. The committee will then know where they are, will know the material they have to deal with, and will make the best they can of it, laying the whole conclusion before the general meeting of the premier club in the autumn. So if a man has a word to say, let him say it before June 30th or for ever after hold his peace.

Mr. Hilton continues to play finely, so, too, does Mr. Laidlay (there was a disposition to make the latter favourite for the St. Andrews medal, even over the head of Mr. F. G. Tait), and Mr. Tait himself continues to play his wonderfully steady, strong game. Mr. Hilton's *forte* is admitted to be the score game, and he has shown once or twice that he does not much like Mr. Tait as an opponent in a match; so, on the whole, it is certain that the latter is popularly expected to do best at Prestwick in the forthcoming tournament. Mr. Laidlay, however, will not be far behind him. If these two should meet, they will probably give us the best match of the meeting; but our hope must be that they will not meet until near the finish. It is always a pity when the best men have to knock each other out in the early stages; but the risk that this may happen is inseparable from the conditions under which the amateur competition is held. For all that, we would not see it changed. There are objections to every plan, and the lovers of score play have their chance in the open competition, in which Vardon plays the favourite's role.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece is from a portrait of Her Grace Lilian Duchess of Marlborough, whose beautiful Surrey home forms the "Country Home" for this week. Before her marriage to the late Duke of Marlborough, the lady who is now allied to Lord William Beresford was known to the world as the beautiful Mrs. Hammersley of New York. Since her residence in England the Duchess has occupied a foremost position in English Society, and has won golden opinions from her invariable courtesy and kindness.



IT would be difficult to find a better situation for a boarding-school than Rugby. It is close to Birmingham, and within easy reach of London; yet Rugby was a village twenty years ago, and though it has grown since then, the place is still but a small town. Five minutes' walk from the school and you are in the country: a pleasant give-and-take country, with low, undulating hills, plenty of spinneys and grass-land, flourishing farms, woods, and coverts, offering many a pretty view, and such a climate! Here you are in the heart of England, and perched on a hill; sharp breezes brace you, and it is hard indeed to be ill at Rugby.

The school is an old foundation, and like many another owes its existence to the public spirit of a humble citizen. Lawrence Sheriffe, the founder, was a Rugby boy, who went up to London and made a moderate fortune as a grocer; at his death in 1567 he left a sum of money and some land for the founding of a school in his own town. For 200 years this school remained much as he meant it to be—a local grammar school, giving a free education to the boys of the neighbourhood, but taking boarders from a distance, who paid fees. Little is

known of these early generations, beyond the names of the masters from the beginning, and of the boys from 1675. Some of the masters were men of power, and some of the boys men of rank or mark, but most of each kind did their day's work unnoticed, and went to their own place. The fame of the school as one of

the great public schools of England is little more than a century old. In 1778, Thomas James, a fellow of King's College, Cambridge, was appointed headmaster; and at the same period the property in London increased so enormously in value, that it was possible to rebuild the school, to get good playing fields, and to reorganise the whole foundation. The older part of the present schools—old Big School and the old quadrangle, with the School House—date from the early part of the present century. The chapel was built soon after

these schools, and has been completely rebuilt since; while so many additions have been made at various times that the old portion is quite thrown into the shade. James was an old Etonian, and brought to Rugby the torch which Eton had received from Winchester. But though he organised the school on Eton lines, he was a genius himself, and introduced some



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THE PLAYGROUND.

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improvements both in methods and subjects which have been claimed for Arnold and others. Thomas James is the creator of the new Rugby, and the school rules are still his, with additions.

Rugby has always been a kind of all-round school for useful men, rather than a seed-bed for scholars, politicians, or divines. Whatever kind of man is most wanted by the country at a period—Rugby produces that kind. In James's day England wanted soldiers and sailors; and we find accordingly that scores of his boys entered the Services, and fought everywhere, from Trafalgar to Waterloo. The same thing has happened ever since when there has been a war—as in the Crimea and the Mutiny, and so down to the battle of Omdurman. A certain number of boys will, of course, always wish to be fighting men in each generation, and Rugby has her Army Class (alas! no Navy Class, as yet), which most effectually speeds them on their path. But these just spoken of are the "overs," so to speak; it is found that, given a big war, many who would otherwise spend a less sanguinary life hasten to serve their King or Queen at the front, and many of them mere boys in age. Rugby has had her V.C.'s, and her famous commanders, too, but it is the rank and file we now speak of. In these days of peace, England seems to require electrical engineers and people to build railways; Rugby is applied to, and not in vain. We pride ourselves on turning out the sound, practical man who is good for anything. Another article always in demand is the M.P., and Rugby does her part here also. At present Rugby comes third among the public schools in this matter, with twenty-three of them, including Mr. Goschen, Mr. R. W. Hanbury, and Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*novum Jovis incrementum*). We do our share also for the Church, second

only to Eton. We have educated nine dignitaries of various sorts, including three bishops, in addition to which many masters have become bishops and deans, and three have been Archbishops of Canterbury in succession—Tait, Benson, and Temple. This is a unique record. Besides these classes of men, always in demand, England now and again is glad of a scholar or literary man. So we fell in with her whim by turning out three poets—Landor, Clough, and Matthew Arnold—and a humourist—Lewis Carroll. As to the professors of Latin and philosophy, and teachers of sound learning of other kinds, it would take hours to tell of them all. During the last half-century the school has felt the influence of Arnold, who to the sound practical powers of the previous type added an earnestness and strength of moral purpose which made the most of them. Through his life and writings, and the work of the men he trained, English education has been deeply moved and improved.

The Rugby boy is singularly free from self-consciousness, and is a very pleasant companion. He will talk freely to his masters, and with a touching confidence, nor does he regard them in the least as monsters. Partly from the fine climate, partly from the arrangement of work which apportions the lessons with sufficient intervals between, he is all alert and alive; always doing something—his own hobbies out of school, and in school work (if he is interested), and mischief (if he is not). He has a certain amount of time for himself, and you can generally get half-a-dozen of your young friends to go for a bicycle ride if you want them; yet he cannot loaf about, or he is speedily dropped on by someone. Small groups may always be seen in the excellent art museum or the library; others, under the wing of the Natural History Society, collect bugs and beetles, grub up fossils, catch butterflies, take photographs, or listen to lectures by their peers or their superiors; others again call down the thunders of Jove in debate, or improve the minds of some literary club, or write papers for the literary journals which from time to time are born, flourish, and die. A favourite recreation is music. There are an orchestra and a brass band; and the night prowler may generally hear, as he passes the study windows, melodious scales played on oboe or clarinet, or the scrape of the bow on fiddle or 'cello. We have our school concerts, our singing competitions, our house singing; but in addition there are frequent concerts of the best music, which we owe chiefly to the energy and public spirit of the musical staff.

There is no need to enter into a detailed description of the games, which are much like games elsewhere. The old Rugby football, with unlimited sides, and many modes of attacking an opponent which are now unlawful, is a thing of the past, save in one or two yearly matches which keep up the tradition. Our river is, unfortunately, not fit for any but toy boats, so we have no wetbobs; but we are peculiarly fond of our runs and our brook-jumping. Most people have heard of the Crick, and this long run of 13½ miles is still one of the year's events. We have a number of traditional runs besides this, and towards Easter boys go out jumping over certain brooks in the neighbourhood. Then there is a large and efficient Volunteer corps, which has twice won the Ashburton Shield, and has won many other prizes besides. There are fives courts and racquet courts, a fine gymnasium, carpenters' workshops, and a swimming-bath.

There are at present 582 boys in the school, of whom between sixty and seventy are day boys or are housed in one of the small houses until they can find room in the big ones.



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THE HEAD-MASTER'S RESIDENCE.

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Parents who come to live in the town have great advantages. There are twelve foundationerships, which carry free tuition, for boys between twelve and fourteen, who have previously been two years in the Lower School of Lawrence Sheriffe, another school in Rugby on the same foundation. There are twenty-four minor foundationerships, granting an education at half fees with certain restrictions. Finally, a boy whose parents live in Rugby gets free education if he enters the fifth form before he is fourteen. There are, besides, scholarships open to competition, and leaving scholarships, as elsewhere. For ordinary boys, the school fees are £40 a year (entrance fee £4 4s.), and boarding fee of £72 a year (entrance £3 3s.). The other fees are: Medical £2 2s., reading-room and museum 7s. 6d., army class £15 15s., laboratory for the modern side £5 5s., and optional expenses, such as musical instruction, gymnasium, and workshop. The games cost each boy a small sum each term; for the rest, he need spend little more. We are not a luxurious school, though, while boys are boys, they will probably spend most of their own money on "stodge." The food is plain and plentiful. All care is taken of health, and there is a sanatorium for such as persist in getting ill.

In the houses there is a feeling of restrained freedom. The boys are left to themselves much more than at some schools, and with excellent results. Work is thoroughly well done at Rugby, and it can challenge comparison with any school. Of this the writer can speak with confidence, because he is able to compare the work of two other large schools of which he has had experience. Last year Rugby carried off a scholarship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and this year two Balliols; and the same thoroughness animates the school from top to bottom. There are clever boys at Rugby, and there are dull boys; but though we cannot make the dull clever, we expect to turn them all out sound, practical men.

W. H. D. ROUSE.



R. W. Thomas. THE HEAD-MASTER IN HIS ROOM. Copyright

CROMWELL AT BASING HOUSE.

THE celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the birth of the Protector reminds us how widespread through the country is the memory of his achievements. North, south, east, or west—go where we will—there is something to speak to us of Oliver. It is nearly always of battle, and generally of victory. Many a time, moreover, from the lips of countrymen, has the writer heard ascribed to the great Puritan the misdeeds of the unscrupulous Vicar-General of Henry. Thomas ravaged much, and left the land poorer for his passage, but Oliver was rarely a despoiler, though Basing House perished under his hand. In him were qualities wherein all classes of Englishmen may find something to admire. They were downright qualities, not always, it is true, conformable to the gentler characters of human nature, and he spared few obstacles that stood in his pathway, but there was always earnestness in what he did, and he was one of the earliest of our empire-builders.

Basing House, by old Basingstoke, is the scene of one of his most famous exploits, though little remains now, as the pictures will tell, to bear witness to the splendours of the place he carried by storm. These broken walls and vaults lie close to the village of Old Basing, and the Basingstoke Canal passes through the midst of the battle-ground. Sir William Paulet, first Marquis of Winchester, rebuilt the older castle of Basing in Tudor times in a style so magnificent that, according to Camden, it "was overpowered by its own weight," and his posterity were compelled to pull some part of it down. There are many oaks and many osiers in Hampshire, and local wits, we suppose, originated the saying that the Marquis was "no oak but an osier"—so skilful a diplomatist, indeed, that he retained his office of Lord Treasurer during four successive reigns. "By my troth," said Elizabeth, when she visited him, "if my Lord Treasurer were but a younger man, I could find it in my heart to have him for a husband."

It was the fifth Marquis—
"He who in impious times undaunted
stood,
And midst rebellion durst be just
and good"—

whose defence of Basing House forms one of the most brilliant pages in the history of the Cavaliers. Indeed, the defence and the storm of the famous place bring out in relief the best temper and earnestness of both parties. Think of the valiant Marquis declaring loudly that, "if the King had no more ground in England but Basing House, he would adventure as he did, and so maintain it to the uttermost," glorying in the thought that his house was called "Loyalty," and that the King "might have a day again." Here was the true spirit of the Cavalier. Not less true is the note of the Puritan. We have the word of good Master Peters for it that the old house of Basing had, for 200 or 300 years, been "a nest of idolatry," and, with his own eyes, did he see "Popish books many, with copes and such utensils." All



G. Jackson Good,

THE RUINS OF OLD BASING HOUSE.

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which, no question, the Lieutenant-General himself considered, for, on the night before the storm, he "rested upon that blessed word of God, written in the psalm, 'They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.'" It was the pious practice of "the man Oliver" to spend much time in prayer before going out to battle, and to have the Lord of Hosts with him in his struggle. Thus, when the sun shone out at Dunbar, he broke forth, "Now let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered!"

When Cromwell had reduced Winchester in October, 1645, he marched to Basing, which had stood out four years, and resolved to win the crowning mercy of its capture; for it was a nest to be routed out, a centre of the King's party, a danger lying upon the flank of communications east and west. It had stood siege after siege during the four years, "ruining poor Colonel This and then poor Colonel That," and it is thought that about 2,000 men lost their lives in the operations and skirmishes thereabout. There were really two houses at Basing, the old and the new, within the circumvallation, which was about a mile in compass. No dearth of supplies afflicted the defenders, for Master Peters found enough for years rather than months: 400 quarters of wheat, hundreds of fitches of bacon, oatmeal, beef and pork, divers cellars full of ale, "and that very good"—he had doubtless drunk thereof. The place had been many times relieved by the carrying in of supplies, and once 1,000 horsemen, under Colonel Gage, had ridden up, each with a sack of corn or other country produce before him, on his saddle.

It is said that the Marquis of Winchester was apprised of a plot between his own brother, Lord Edward Paulet, and Sir Hardress Waller to surprise the house, and that he was ready and had lined the hedges with musketeers. Cromwell made all preparations for the assault on the night of October 13th, and at six o'clock the next morning, upon the signal of four guns, the storming parties advanced, and carried both houses without much loss to themselves, the leaders being Colonels Dalbier, Pickering, Montague, and Sir Hardress Waller. Of the defenders, about seventy-four were killed, with one woman, who provoked the assailants with her tongue; but some escaped, and nearly 300 were taken prisoners, including the Marquis himself, Sir Robert Peak, and other officers. A Roundhead



CROMWELL, THE PROTECTOR.

(After Sir Peter Lely.)

scandal asserts that the defenders were taken unawares, being surprised while playing cards; and there is a Hampshire saying, "Clubs are trumps, as when Basing House was taken." But

this story presents no points of credibility, though doubtless the great assault had something of the character of a surprise. The struggle was as gallant on one side as it was resolute on the other, and these poor fragments bespeak the fury of the fray. That ivy-clad gate-house, with the three swords in pile of the Paulets, is the most considerable remain. There was raised aloft their motto, "Aimez Loyauté," which the great Marquis is said to have written himself with a diamond on every window-pane of his mansion. In those vaults, now thrown open to the sky, perished several, whom Master Peters heard crying, without the possibility of escape, for flames were rising without. The name of the victor is preserved in "Oliver Cromwell's Dell," close by; the fate of the vanquished in neighbouring "Slaughter Close."

Those who do not know the history of the capture of Basing House may wonder how destruction so complete was brought about. Plunder was the beginning of the end. The Marquis had loved the arts—Inigo Jones was with him to the end, and came out uninjured after the assault—and his house was stored with treasures. The pillage was swift and long continued. One soldier had 120 pieces of gold for his share, some had plate, others jewels. One man who seized three bags of silver let his tongue wag too freely, and was himself despoiled, till he had left but one half-crown. Then the soldiery laid hands on the



F. Mason Good.

OLD BASING CHURCH FROM THE ROAD.

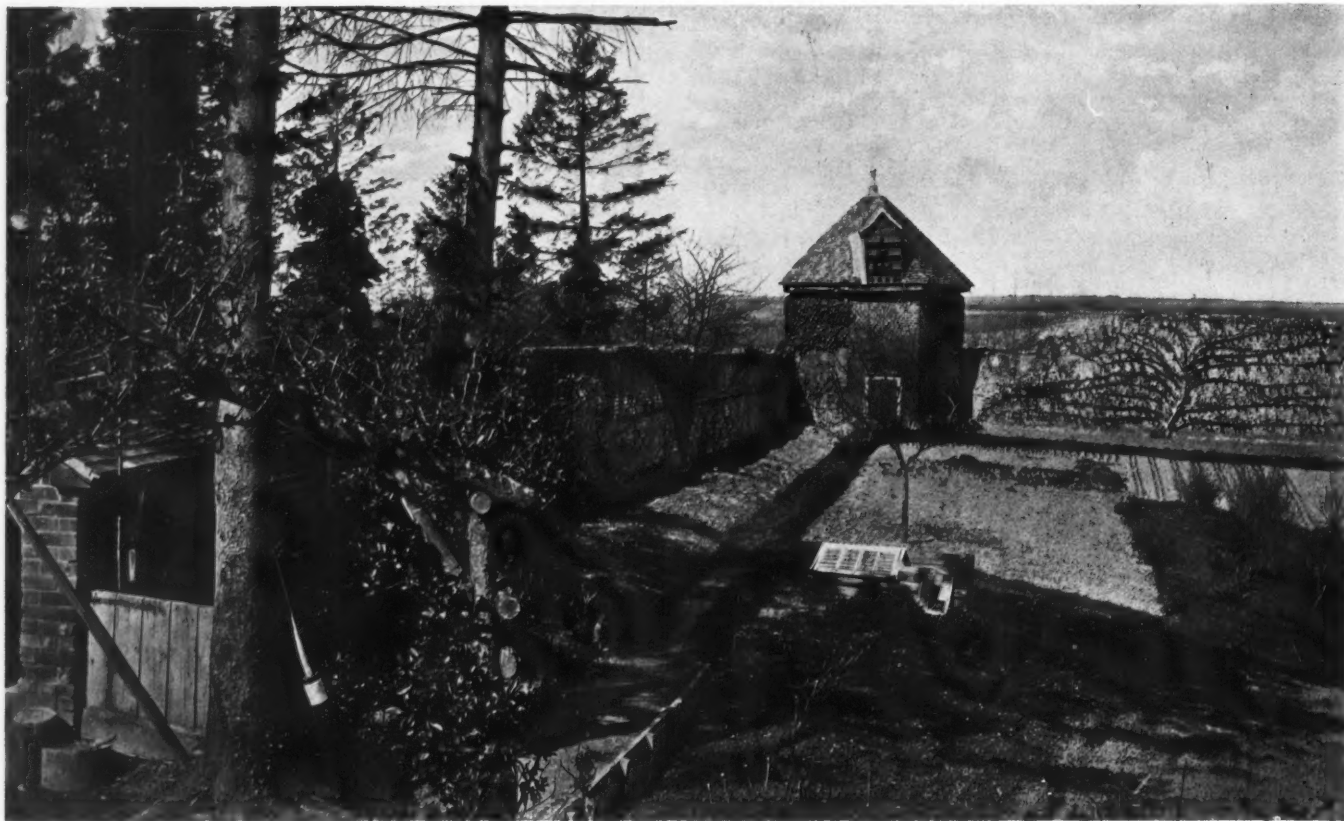
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F. Mason Good.

THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL AT OLD BASING.

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THE DOVECOT OF OLD BASING HOUSE.

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wheat, and sold it to the villagers and others, and the furniture and plenishings were dragged forth, and vended to all the countryside, the treasures of old Basing House being thus spread for many a mile. The iron bars were torn from the windows, and the lead stripped from the roof and gutters. Then came fire to carry on the work, "which made more than ordinary haste," says Peters, "leaving nothing but bare walls and chimneys in less than twenty hours—being occasioned by the neglect of the enemy"—we wonder how, since they were dead, fugitive, or captured—"in quenching a fire-ball of ours at first." Poor Basing House was, indeed, so far fallen through Parliamentary guns and mortars, and the ravages of fire—"exceedingly ruined," said Cromwell—that he advised it should be "sighted," and a garrison established at Newbury instead.

For the great mercy of the fall of Basing, Parliament, having heard the report of Master Peters, ordered thanks to be rendered to Heaven, and, the better to wipe out the memory of the gallant defence, desired that so much of the house as remained should be carted away. "Whoever will come for brick or stone shall freely have the same for his pains." In this way was the splendid pile destroyed, and, wherever a tottering fragment of

wall stood erect, wind and time have long since levelled it with the ground. Yet the few stones of "Loyalty" that still are there speak loudly enough of history, and the scene of the heroic and long-drawn struggle is, in its memories, one of the most interesting places in Hampshire.

JOHN LEYLAND.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

SOME who knew Mrs. Oliphant—and the present writer is privileged to reckon himself among the number—may be inclined to wish that her "Autobiography and Letters" (Blackwood) had been subjected to a little more editing; than they have received. There are passages in them of an exceedingly intimate nature, describing domestic afflictions bravely endured, which, outspoken though they seem to be, obviously lie open to a suspicion that they do not convey the whole truth. Mrs. Oliphant, however, intended that her autobiography should be printed; and if her niece, Mrs. Coghill, has erred, we may be sure that it was out of no lack of reverence. Besides, the world at large could barely understand the dignity of Mrs. Oliphant's life without some, at least, of the indications that she herself supplied. Her position when she began to write was such as would have broken down most women's strength in a fortnight. She was left, at thirty-six, a widow with her ink-pot for a cruse. Yet she contrived to maintain herself and educate her two sons; while later on there came a brother and two nieces and a nephew, whom she supported. This without assuming any of the airs of neurotic seclusion to which some authors are addicted, for she was always accessible to her family and her friends, working at odd moments or at night. Open-handed by nature to the verge of extravagance, she never, at the same time, paraded herself as a celebrity, but lived with her own circle at Windsor and, during the last few months, at Wimbledon. It is difficult to believe that anyone can lay down her "Autobiography" without a strong sense of admiration for her unflinching courage and noble fidelity to her duty as she understood it—not without searchings of heart. She held strongly by her opinions, and refused to modify them even at the request of her publishers, the Blackwoods, with whom it is hardly necessary to say that her relations were ideal. She hated social pretence, but she could put up with individualities very different from her own; and one of the pleasantest sketches in this volume is that of the Carlyles, whom she describes as quite other than the melodramatically miserable pair imagined by Froude. Mrs. Oliphant had, indeed, the genius of true friendship, and her affections sustained her against the consciousness that she would leave little of permanent value behind her. There is no real note of bitterness in the comparison of her position with George Eliot's and other contemporaries'. But let us hope that Mrs. Oliphant's novels have more vitality than she imagined. They would no doubt have gained by revision and care bestowed on execution; but their distinguishing quality, after all, is a keenness of insight that no amount of polish can produce. In any case, her memory will long endure through her "Autobiography," since few more touching records have ever been composed of a courageous career, full of much undeserved suffering, but also full of much keen enjoyment of life in the fullest sense of the word.

Mr. J. W. Mackail's "Life of William Morris" (Longmans) by no means contains as many revelations as Mrs. Oliphant's "Autobiography." He has dealt with a simple subject, so far as disposition goes, though diverse enough in its occupations as to need a syndicate of biographers. William Morris was unquestionably a fine man, grotesquely vehement in his antipathies, but yet wonderfully tolerant of others' frailties. He strove, equally beyond question, to do good in his generation, even if his political aspirations were a curious blend of the fifteenth century with some very remote future. Mr. Mackail's story that he became disgusted with Socialism, while still clinging to it as a duty, when he perceived the cowardice of a Trafalgar Square mob, confronted by the police



F. Mason Good.

THE GATEWAY.

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whom it outnumbered many times over, proves how entirely his revolutionary politics were a matter of temperament, not of experience. Much of the Old Tory continued, besides, to abide in Morris, a remnant, no doubt, of the views imbibed at Exeter College, Oxford, where the last wave of the Tractarian movement all but swept him into the Church. His letter, announcing his change of plan to his disappointed mother, is a model of what such letters should be. It would be impossible in this place to follow Mr. Mackail through his appreciation of William Morris as poet, decorator, carpet weaver, printer, and artificer in general. The literary chapters are particularly well done, and render Morris full justice, while tacitly admitting that he wrote too rapidly and published too much. But the most interesting part of the two volumes is concerned with the famous Red House at Upton, where he began that reform of taste in interior designing to which, even in its excesses, the present generation owes so much. The history of "The Brotherhood, Limited," as it has been cleverly called, is worth reading, even if it is considered as a trade venture, but it would be unjust to approach a great artistic experiment in the spirit of commercialism. Altogether, the biography of this versatile man could not have been more adequately written by a single hand; and biography by co-operation would be a hazardous experiment, even with William Morris's many aims to work upon.

Miss Beatrice Harraden's "Ships that Pass in the Night," encouraged the hope that she had it in her to win her way to the front of modern fiction. "The Fowler" (Blackwood) unfortunately marks a retrogression rather than an advance. As a first attempt, it would be very, very promising; as a subsequent one, it is a disappointment. Yet the book is cleverly written, and some of the characters are well imagined, particularly Nurse Isabel, a handsome hoydenish lady who has taken up her vocation without any real aptitude for it. A country landlady and her associates are also humorously described, and if they repeat themselves, there is the excuse that rustic wit seldom gets away from a groove. The chief personages of Miss Harraden's story, however, cannot be called beings of flesh and blood, but rather incomprehensible abstractions. "The Fowler," who tries to snare the female sex generally, and Nora Penstone in particular, is

a little man, Theodore Bevan by name, whom some call "the centipede," and others "the viper gentleman." He was supposed to have written leaders in the *Times*, and also to be the author of various anonymous works. When they were mentioned, "he merely smiled and shrugged his shoulders, inferring by his manner that people might think whatever they chose." At that rate, most of us could be eminent, though it is to be feared that no amount of shrugging would qualify for election at a good literary club. As for his fowling, it consisted in the unsportsmanlike pursuit of isolating girls from their friends, filling their minds with morbid ideas, and, as one of his victims complains, "leaving their mental and moral individuality in ruins." It must be confessed that the process by which he nearly contrives to enslave Nora Penstone remains somewhat obscure, despite copious extracts from his diary, which said volume, falling into her hands, brings about her emancipation. "The Fowler," in short, is rather society as imagined in the schoolroom or the convent than society as it exists. Miss Harraden should observe human nature more closely before she tries again, as we hope she will.

Miss Arabella Kenely, in "A Semi-Detached Marriage" (Hutchinson), has chosen much the same theme as Miss Harraden—the clash of wills between a healthy-minded girl and a sybaritic, cynical man—but she handles it much more deftly. Sir Latimer Coyle defines love as "a flame celestial, a spark Olympian, never intended for the warming apparatus of a drawing-room." Celia Welldon, therefore, consents to be married to him under the conditions implied in the title of the novel—with what unhappy consequences Miss Kenely is best left to tell. Her pages are packed with shrewd observations, and, though she necessarily touches upon what it used to be fashionable to call "sexual problems," she does so in a manner wholly void of offence. Altogether "A Semi-Detached Marriage" is a most creditable book, which many writers of much more experience than Miss Kenely might take pride in having written. It would, however, have been improved by a little more attention paid to grammar, since she has coined a strange adverb or two—"compunctiously" for example—and not un frequently uses transitive verbs intransitively.

THE GENTLE BUSTER.

"When you break a piece of china, it stays broke, don't it? Well, that's where china is mighty different from bronchos."—From the casual remarks of Hornsilver Smith.

"WALLA WALLA JIM'S going to gentle some bronchos to-day. Want to see him do it?" Hornsilver Smith looked at Daddy as he put the question, but when my father replied that he did not believe he cared about it, Hornsilver continued to look exactly as if he had not been answered, and only changed his expression of countenance when I said that I would like to see it very much. At this, distinct disapproval was written on the face of my estimable parent; he had a vague idea that while we were experimenting the cattle country it was his duty to be a mother to me, and as a mother he had semi-occasional ideas of discouraging Mr. Hornsilver Smith's somewhat obvious attentions. This was one of the semi-occasions; but it did not, of course, occur to him to say that he would prefer my not riding so far, or that gentling a horse was not an interesting process to watch. The only alternative that presented itself to him was to look as if he would like to say that, as I was going, he would go too. But to announce suddenly that he had changed his mind seemed somewhat difficult for him—he not being a woman, though a mother—so I changed it for him, and in ten minutes we three were off to what Hornsilver Smith described as Walla Walla Jim's Winter Palace, and located as being "not an inch over ten miles or so, over on the main trail."

The Winter Palace consisted of two rooms and three million fleas. English people, I am told, will not consider it nice of me to mention even one of the three million. All I can say is that it is much nicer of me to mention them as fleas than as what some of them really were.

Walla Walla Jim was not at home when we arrived, but we entered with that assured feeling of ownership in another man's property which always struck me as being one of the leading characteristics of life in the cattle country. I will say that we were more nearly justified in taking possession than would have been the case usually, for when Hornsilver Smith told Walla Walla Jim that we might ride over some day, that hospitable gentleman had replied that we could not come too quick to suit him; also that if he happened not to be there when we rode up, we were to kick in the door and begin cooking.

The door was not locked, and it was not time for cooking; but Hornsilver Smith saw it was just exactly time for drinking—it generally was, I think—and proceeded to look for glasses.

"Walla's a particular cuss; he says whisky don't taste good out of tin, and that when a man's living in civilisation, like he is here, he's got no business drinking out of a bottle. Here's the tumblers; what size'll you choose?"

Tumblers was evidently the generic cow-country name for anything whatever made of glass with a fundamental idea of being drunk from. Champagne, sherry, port, burgundy, hock, whisky—and-soda, and the entire family of conglomerate American drinks, to say nothing of plain water and medicine, could have been suitably served in the array of glasses which the opening of a door disclosed.

"There must be six or seven dozen," I ventured.

"A heap more than that. You see, Walla Walla was a New York swell once—but you needn't go mentioning it to him—and he's a methodical cuss, and can housekeep to beat a woman. He made a running guess how many drinks a day he'd take, added a hundred per cent. for the boys riding past, and then bought enough glasses so's he'd only have to wash up on the first and fifteenth of every month. He is just nasty neat, Walla Walla is."

Enter, as if this had been his cue, the originator of this scheme of housekeeping made easy; but he was far from being alone, being followed by what he called the entire strength of the company. There were four dogs and some cats, a hen and her half-grown chickens, also a small pig, chased out ignominiously, and returning immediately and persistently. A "tame" calf

lounged sociably in the doorway and listened contemptuously to our conversation; but the evident prima donna of the troupe was a duck, which settled itself comfortably in a bucket of water near the door, and watched us gravely out of one side or other of its head, according to its paddlings.

"This is my family," explained our host. "You see, after a man's busted bronks all day right through the season he needs the refinements of home, or else he'd turn into a wild animal himself in short order."

"He lives here in the off season, you see," put in Hornsilver. "And so I just get the tamest things I can and make 'em tamer if I can. Here, Emily, come to your pappy."



REMITTANCE KID'S PITCHER.

The duck gravely fell over the edge of the bucket, and went towards him, flat-footed and confiding.

"Now open your mouth pretty and smile." Emily obediently split her head almost in two, horizontally, and said, "Wa-a-k," then hastily relapsed into the bucket.

"I call her Emily, after that actress that had such a big mouth; I believe it opened on a hinge at the back of her neck, same general plan as the lid of a cake-box. Emily couldn't sing, either, just like this duck can't, so the name suits the duck right down to the ground. I don't suppose you ever saw her, did you?"

He asked the question with considerable carelessness, laughed, but looked disappointed when I said I had not, and then said it was about time to go make those bronchos humble and mindful of death.

"How long does it take to break a horse?" I asked. I pride myself on being a strictly average member of my sex. That is just the kind of a question an average woman would ask.

"Depends on how long a horse lives, at least the kind you get out here," said Hornsilver Smith.

"You see," interposed Walla Walla Jim, "what makes it so hard on a broncho"—"Not to mention the buster," interpolated the other—"is that they don't know what a bridle is like till they are four or five years old, and then breaking 'em is about as easy as breaking bad news."

"But when they are broken, I suppose——"

"You mean, when they are broke," interrupted Hornsilver Smith, ruthlessly. "If there is one thing I can't stand it's bad English. You oughtn't say a horse is broken any more than you'd say that a man that had lost his pile had 'gone bursted'; you say he's 'gone busted,' don't you?"

"Or clean busted," answered Walla Walla James, Esq., with an air of nice and critical suggestion. I pursued my way serenely.

"But when they are once broken, I suppose they are as quiet as if you had begun when they were colts?"

"That's where you are dead wrong; as a matter of fact, anything you suppose about a broncho is apt to be wrong. No matter what you expect, that's what they don't do. Well, Remittance Kid, trot out Number One." This to an extra youthful cowboy, of English colouring, and a delightful manner.

The process of trotting out Number One was a somewhat lengthy one; it consisted principally of keeping it from trotting out by strangling it with a rope around its neck till it dropped, and then sitting on its head until Walla Walla Jim was ready to get into the saddle. The actual getting in was accomplished in some mysterious way at the moment that Number One sprang to his feet in what, I believe, drill tactics describe as being in "one time and two motions"; translated into understandable English, this means that it was done just twice as quickly as you had any reason to expect.

Hornsilver Smith said that the horse was a bucker from way back, but technical language is hardly ever really descriptive. To me it seemed as if the horse was under the impression that he was a new version of a four-bladed knife, trying to snap itself shut, and this while he was quite away from the ground. He would shoot into the air on a level keel, so to speak, and half-way fold his legs together, then somehow manage to unfold



DOWNHILL PITCHING IS SAFE.

them in time to come down suddenly perfectly square, with his fore legs as stiff as a poker, and also perfectly ready for an encore, which he gave instantaneously, and without waiting to be asked. Throughout it all Walla Walla sat serene, if hatless, while a select audience of cows looked on in bland contemplation of a broncho who was fool enough to be of a demonstrative temperament.

"And you call that horse already broken?" I asked of Hornsilver Smith.

"W'y, certainly. Don't he wear his bridle all right? and have you heard him object to the saddle? No, sir; not him. All these bronchos was busted last year, and now they are just remarking that they been turned loose to graze during of the winter, and don't care particular about getting down to office hours again. Now Walla's going to change off, on to another horse."

Changing off of this horse was easy, of course, but changing to the next one was a song in a different key. He was a clay-bank horse, with strong objections to everything. It took half-an-hour and four men to saddle him, and Walla Walla rode him as that character of Lever's played the violin—by the grace of God and main strength. Even when in the saddle, he by no means stayed in; not that he was thrown, but that he got off. For when a horse lies down and suddenly rolls over, it is just as well for a rider to disembark. What this horse could not seem to get into his head was the fact that Walla Walla Jim *did* get off. He accepted his rider's on-ness as a permanent fact, and could not, for the life of him, understand

why getting the saddle—and presumably the man in it—between him and the earth did not declare any dividends in the way of a dead broncho-buster. When, on the twenty-fifth time of asking, the conundrum still remained unanswered, the horse gave it up, and cantered amiably away over the prairie, obedient, meek, and, therefore, uninteresting.

The tactics of Number Three were moved on a step further. He accepted the bridle; there was only a preliminary skirmish over the saddle; he did not even remonstrate beyond the demands of conventionality—as she is understood in the best broncho society—at Walla Walla Jim's planting himself therein. But having settled preliminaries to the satisfaction of all concerned, and, as it were, shaken hands in token of the good feeling which is always supposed to exist in athletic contests, Number Three took matters into his own feet. He was a



Photos.

KEPT SORT OF BUSY.

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pitching broncho, also from way back, or somewhere near there, I suppose. To be a pitching broncho means to be a horse who makes bets with himself as to how near he can come to standing straight up on his hind legs without tipping over backwards. Making the bets with the horse he did, broncho Number Three generally won, but winning came high sometimes; it is a way it has. Moralising aside, however, Number Three in his pitchings reckoned without his Walla Walla; also without a law in physics which has something to do with something difficult, called, I believe, the force of gravity; also without something else I don't know the name of, but which the average woman would call a sense of up-and-down-hill.

Walla Walla had it. The moment that Number Three would get up on his hind legs and make gestures at the sky with his front legs, Walla Walla would, like General Kitchener, adapt his tactics to the geographical conformation. You see the prairie was not level, and all that he had to do was to keep Number Three's head turned downhill, when his pitching became very uphill work indeed. If you have any doubts on the subject just walk halfway downstairs on your hands and knees, head first, and then try to get up without turning around; the experiment will not be a dignified one, but it will be convincing. And this was about the equivalent of what Number Three had to do. Not that it was a failure; on the contrary, it had a good appearance of success from the horse's point of view. Walla Walla, the redoubtable, the invincible, was, to use his own phrase (afterwards) "kept sort of busy, and don't you forget it." He did not disdain to hang on with both hands to the pommel, to the cantle, to the mane of Number Three, to anything that would keep him with the horse. At the same time he had to be ready to save himself—if he could—if the horse went over backwards, and also to urge him on to enough further effort to wear him out, which is what "gentling" a broncho really means.

It was all one more evidence of what an idiot the horse was. If, along with his other alleged brains, he had only had in his head the equivalent of a spirit level, he would have realised that all he had to do in order to win was to turn round. His pitching would have been to some purpose; he would have gone

As to the last horse, I was quite convinced that it was a reincarnation of some woman who had tried hard to learn how to play lawn tennis. You know how a woman beginner at that game seems to be mainly occupied with attempts to kick the air in different directions at once, and at the same time brandish both arms at nothing at all? And how the exertions she makes ought to yield better results, or rather more of them, than they ever do? This horse's plan of action was exactly similar; there was so much more action than there was plan. Then, too, it was so hysterically emotional over what it did not accomplish and so unnecessarily surprised over what it did. I would not

have been at all surprised to learn that it kept its bridle on with hat-pins and a piece of elastic for a throat latch, and, after the game was over, to see it go off for a cup of tea, tenderly carrying a racket done up in the usual green baize chest protectors. I suggested naming the horses, and, of course, calling this one Racket. But Hornsilver Smith vetoed naming a broncho; he said it put it on a level with battleships and brands of cigars, and towns and things of importance. When I argued that in all probability the horse would not know it, he said:

"Well, I aint so sure about that. Horses are like the Chinese—they haven't got any sense, but they know a lot."

By this time the exertions of the broncho had changed in character; they were less like lawn tennis and more like an

emotional ballet. I thought it interesting, there was so much variety in it; but Walla Walla Jim said it was too mild a case for him to fool with, and turned it over to the tender ministrations of the Remittance Kid. I enquired what sort of a kid that was.

"Well, you see, there is lots of young men sent out here from most everywhere, account of their families not knowing what else to do with them. They don't earn their salt; and what they live on is what their people remit to them every month. So that's the how of calling them remittance men; only this one is nothing but a kid. Let's go back to the Winter Palace; I reckon there is some clean tumblers left yet."

While Walla Walla Jim was dispensing liquid hospitality I ranged about the room, or as much of it as was not already



A BUCKER FROM WAY BACK.



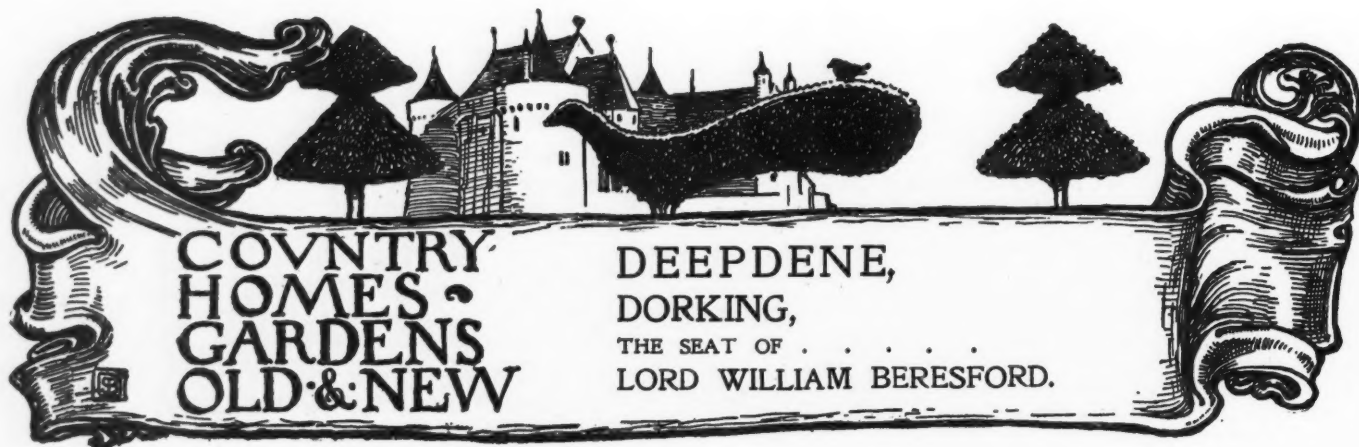
A FOUR-MILE DASH.

over backwards, with no trouble at all, and killed Walla Walla with neatness and extra despatch.

The next horse was an improved patent on his predecessor. He was not only what Walla Walla called a pitcher from Pitchville, but a biter, on discovery of which Walla put on what he called his "chaps"; they were a sort of half-trouser of goat-skin, hair and all, that covered the outside of the leg from hip to heel. The broncho's expression of countenance when he reached back for a piece of Walla Walla, and only got a mouthful of goat's-hair, was something to be remembered. I am quite certain that if he is still alive he regrets that that part of his education was totally neglected which would teach a horse to spit.

lumbered up with many saddles, boots, bridles, and parts of harness. In one corner was a rough shelf, covered with purplish-pink tissue paper; on it was a scrap book, its "marbled" binding hidden under a slip cover of electric-blue plush, adorned with a flamboyant and undecipherable monogram. The clippings within had taken on that yellowish tint and air of out-of-dateness that, of all printed matter, newspaper clippings assume the soonest. They made an evidently complete chronicle of the theatrical successes of an actress whose various photographs plentifully illustrated the volume. The name of the actress was Emily Soldene.

FLORENCE HAYWARD.



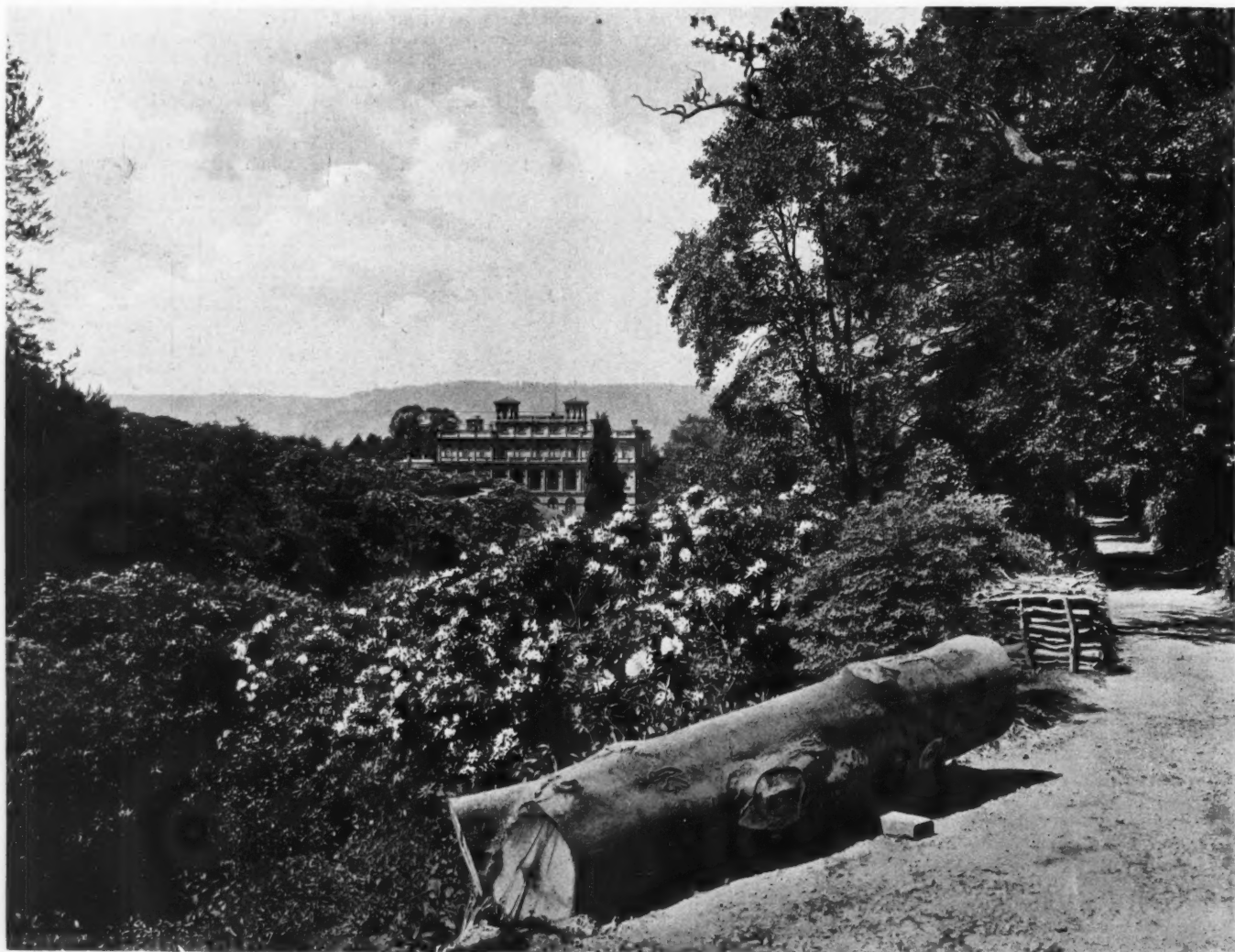
COUNTRY HOMES & GARDENS OLD & NEW

DEEPDENE,
DORKING,
THE SEAT OF
LORD WILLIAM BERESFORD.

A GARDEN that has received the commendation of Evelyn and of Aubrey is consecrated in the minds of garden-lovers. Such a place is Deepdene, which lies near to Dorking town, in what is certainly the most beautiful region of Surrey. Evelyn, as we all know, spent his latter days at Wotton, near by, and delighted in the woodland glories of that sylvan land, but he had known the Dorking country long before. In 1665, when he still was working to perfect his famous mansion and gardens of Saye's Court at Deptford, he once journeyed specially "to Dorking to see Mr. Charles Howard's amphitheatre garden—a solitary recess, being fifteen acres, environed by a hill." It was an apt description, for the garden at Deepdene is, in effect, upon the slopes of a beautiful, amphitheatre-like dell, where now fine coniferous trees and magnificent banks of rhododendrons luxuriate, and glorify the place with sumptuous colour "in the prime of summer-time." Aubrey, not less than Evelyn, was entranced with the beauty of Deepdene, which he pronounced to be "the most pleasant and delightful solitude for house, gardens, and boscaiges" that he had ever seen. It seems probable that the visitor in these days will but re-echo his words.

When the Howards left Deepdene it passed through many hands. Mr. Thomas Hope, the author of "Anastatius," purchased the estate early in the present century, and about fifty-six years ago the old house was replaced by the present imposing classical structure, and the grounds extended. But the sites of not less than three earlier mansions are known at Deepdene. One was in Chart Park, and some noble old cedars still mark the place of its gardens. Many changes, indeed, had passed over this romantic estate when, about four years ago, it became the home of Lord William Beresford and of Lily Duchess of Marlborough, whose love for flowers and the beauties of the garden is unbounded.

The physical configuration of the country in which Deepdene lies lends itself surpassingly well to fine garden and landscape effects. Here are variety and a beautiful character of hill and slope to be enhanced, not, as in many places, to be created. Hence the glory and success of the result. From the top of the hill, near a monument dedicated "to the best of brothers," there is a magnificent outlook. On the north are the house and pleasure grounds; the spire of St. Martin's at Dorking rises into view, with the North Downs beyond; and glorious

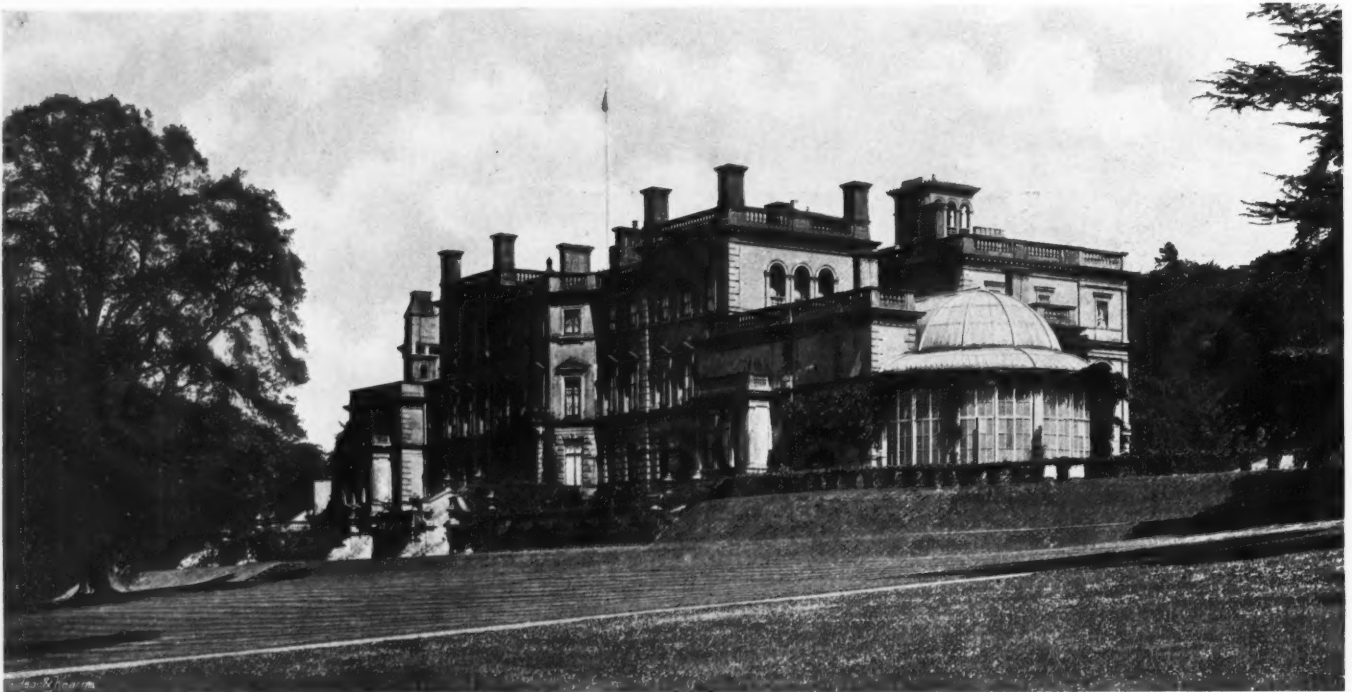




"COUNTRY LIFE."

GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—DEEPDENE: A RHODODENDRON WALK.

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FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Box Hill adds its charms to the prospect. Then the eye wanders southward over the beautiful country of the Wealds of Surrey and Sussex, and, but for the woods, the tower upon Leith Hill would be visible. Beeches luxuriate near the monument, and an avenue is upon the crest, the trees standing up darkly against the sky. A pleasant land, indeed, is this, far from the busy world, fit haunt for retirement—as for Disraeli, who here wrote much of "Coningsby."

Deepdene never looks so beautiful, perhaps, as on some evening of summer, when the rhododendrons are weighted with their wealth of flowers. In banks and masses they break in upon the green lawns, and tempt the visitor to penetrate their dense recesses, or, as single bushes, adorn the winding paths of the gardens. There is nothing rigid, harsh, ugly, or artificial at Deepdene, and the simple beauty of its unconventional character is far preferable to the more elaborate effects of landscape gardening which are found in the vicinity of many stately homes.

This character arises from Nature asserting her power where the imitator of Nature would perhaps have gone astray.

The conifers and rhododendrons are the true glory of the place, as will have been inferred. They flourish greatly in the rich warm soil, mixed here and there with yellow sand, and the hills protect them from the keenest frosts of winter and the easterly blasts of inclement spring. American plants of all kinds, like whortlebury and hardy azalea, prosper. Blue gromwell (*Lithospermum prostratum*) carpets the ground with colour in the spring, masses of shoots lying in the shrubberies, and throwing the bold groups into relief with colour as blue as that of the gentianella which clothes the Alpine meadows in the spring.

Among many fine trees we distinguish the conifer known as *Cryptomeria japonica*—very different here from the feeble specimens seen in many gardens where this fickle race is a failure. The various conifers of Deepdene are, in fact, chosen



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VIEW FROM THE RHODODENDRON WALK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



"COUNTRY LIFE."

GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—DEEPDENE: LUXURANT TREES AND GORGEOUS SHRUBS.

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for their suitability to the soil. If owners of large gardens would take account of this important matter, we certainly should see fewer of those gaunt araucarias, Wellingtonias, taxodiums, and other trees which, with their imperfect growth, are the disfigurement, instead of being the charm, of many good gardens.

Let us not hurry, however, from the surroundings of the house. Standing on the north front, on a fine summer evening, the gay banks of rhododendrons are seen grouped against sombre firs behind, and the sun shines through with rich and ruddy glow. You will perhaps find nowhere else anything so strong and varied in colour, so luxuriant, and so free and bold, as this beautiful valley of rhododendrons.

The Duchess of Marlborough has effected some improvements since she came to Deepdene, by opening up views which were obscured by a too vigorous growth of shrubs. Too much leafiness will not only hide pleasant vistas, but will interfere with the proper growth of trees and flowers. Glorious copper beeches are on the right side of the mansion, contrasting finely with the bright green of neighbouring trees. Rhododendrons are there also, in thickets and circles, and there is a splendid specimen of the tulip tree, with larches, silver birches, brilliant hardy azaleas, yews, exotic conifers, such as *Picea insignis*, *P. Pinsapo*, *P. Cembra*, and evergreen oaks.

The lower parts of the grounds at Deepdene are also very beautiful. In one place a border of hardy flowers runs through a garden of fruit trees, and is filled with perennials that are gay with colour from spring until the autumn sunflowers and star-worts have passed away. Near by are some spiral yews, which have been closely trimmed, and add a quaint touch of character to the place. On the east side of a plant house that splendid noisette rose, William Allen Richardson, has established itself, and, though planted only two years ago, produces crowds of its apricot-coloured blossoms.

The plant houses at Deepdene, which have been built within

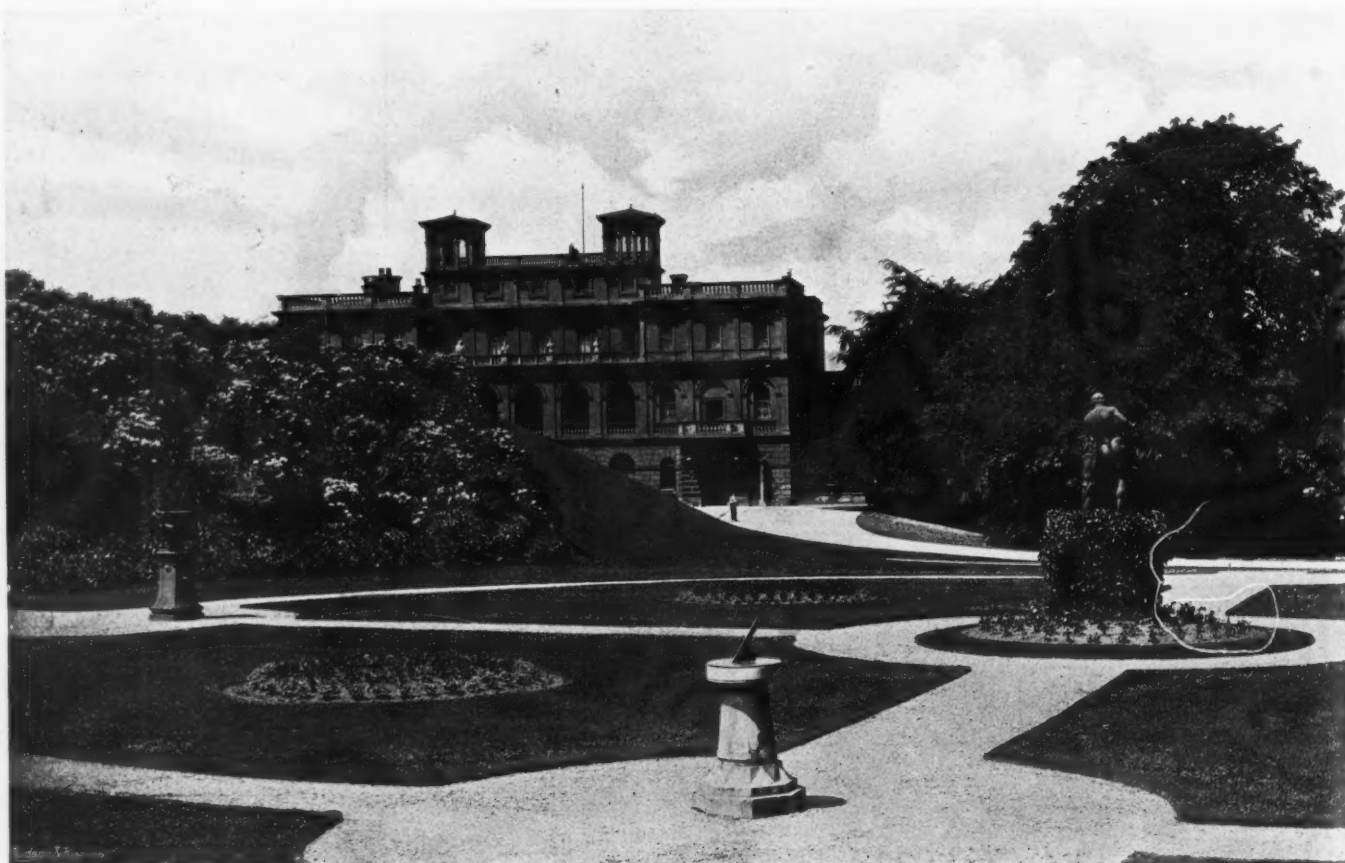


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THE WEST ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the last few years, are models of construction. The Duchess is a lover of orchids, and here we see odontoglossums, cattleyas, dendrobiums, and others, in the perfection of beauty and health. Among them is a variety of cattleya called after the late Duke of Marlborough, which we believe is the only specimen in the country. The flowers are as beautiful in colour as they are in form—the lip clear rose purple, passing to soft apricot in the throat, with delicate rosy petals. A large house is devoted to carnations, to the newer Malmaison varieties in particular, and in other structures are well-grown gloxinias in great variety, arum lilies, beautiful caladiums, and palms.



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THE SUNDIAL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Of course the vine, peach, and other choice fruits are largely cultivated. In one corner a brown Turkey fig has covered a wall, and lilies of the valley are in the border. Many other special points concerning Deepdene might have been given, but enough has been said to show how picturesque, graceful, and charming is the place.

TRAINING SPANIELS.

MOST people seem to think that it is hopeless for an ordinary mortal to attempt to break a spaniel. The idea is embodied in the old saw, "The spaniel, the wife, and the walnut tree, The more you beat them the better they be." But though it is often quoted to spaniel lovers, it does not owe its survival, at least so far as the dog is concerned, to any foundation of truth. For although many keepers consider it proper to give their spaniels a good thrashing in the morning, so that they may start work in a chastened spirit, the best authorities are unanimous in agreeing that in his training, as in that of all other sporting dogs, the more moderately the whip is used the better the results will be.

Some exponents, indeed, go further still, advising that the puppy on doing wrong should not even be admonished by word of mouth, but only have his attention distracted, on the principle that if he does not know that he is doing wrong he will not want to do it again. In extreme cases they recommend that the puppy should be laughed and jeered at, a humiliation which no self-respecting dog will risk a second time. The writer tried this method, but failed, perhaps because his laughter was forced and his jeers did not ring true as he watched the death agonies of a favourite cockerel, but rather, he is inclined to think, because in it sufficient allowance is not made for a spaniel's love of mischief.

In the writer's experience the whip properly used is a most valuable assistant to the trainer. The improper use of it, the two or three slashes, and the whipping which does not hurt him, merely puzzles the dog and teaches contempt. When a dog has to be whipped the ceremony should be as impressive as possible. If other dogs are out they should be "dropped" in a circle round the culprit, who should be lifted either by the scruff of the neck or, as is done with hounds, by the stern, and thrashed thoroughly with a dog whip. Such a lesson will have a considerable moral effect on all the dogs present.

But to leave the important but unpleasant subject of whipping, the spaniel is more difficult to break than other dogs used for shooting, in just the same degree that he can be made more useful. He can be taught to combine the work of the retriever and of the setter, the latter, too, in places where, unlike the setter, he cannot be seen by his master. Again, the keenness and determination which drive him through the thickest gorse and bramble covert first show themselves in the puppy as pig-headedness, the quality which has given him his bad name. Of the various breeds of spaniels, the Clumber, the subject of the accompanying photographs, is the least afflicted with this fault. He is also, contrary to what might be expected from his French extraction, less impetuous than his English cousins, and therefore altogether easier to break; not that he is at all wanting

in the bump of obstinacy. Everyone who has attempted to train one of these dogs must know the look of patient expostulation which on some mornings a Clumber puppy will wear when told to perform the simplest trick. Endearments and encouragement are of no use. The whip would be worse. His master must patiently wait perhaps twenty minutes before the puppy, finding resistance useless, will, with a self-complacency worthy of the celebrated Jack Horner, condescend to perform his trick.

Clumbers should be worked in a team of three, one of which at least should retrieve. The team should quarter the ground in front of the gun or line of guns, never going so far ahead as to put up game out of shot, and never "running in" to game which they have put up. For this it is necessary to begin the training very young. The puppies should have a good grass run attached to their kennels, but they should never be allowed out of this without the attendance of their trainer, and he should never let them wander from him, even



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WAITING FOR THE GUNS.

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BETSY SENT FOR A RABBIT.

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in their play, more than 20yds. By consistently following this course it becomes part of a dog's nature to keep his eye on his master and to feel uncomfortable unless near him. "Dropping" to hand, wing, and shot should also be taught early. It is impossible to obtain perfection in this trick if the dog is not taught it before he is six months old. The dog when dropped should never be allowed to rise until called by name and ordered to.

Walking at heel and retrieving should also be taught while the dog is very young. Care, however, should be taken not to weary the puppy of these tricks, and the trainer should constantly change the object which the puppy has to retrieve. A tobacco pouch is a good thing to begin with, as dogs do not care for its taste, and therefore will not bite it hard. Clumbers are rather inclined to be hard-mouthed, therefore great care should be taken to prevent the puppy from dropping



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MAY DELIVERING UP.

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the object he is retrieving. It is in picking it up a second time that he gives an annoyed bite and contracts the bad habit.

When the puppies are separately perfect at this, two should be taken out together, and, finally, the three. When retrieving they should all be dropped, the object should be thrown, and after a wait of half a minute one should be told to fetch it. In giving such an order the name of the dog should always precede the order, and the other puppies be kept in their places by a cord from the collar previously fastened to a peg in the ground.

When perfection has been obtained so far, and the puppies have learnt that they each possess an individuality, the more interesting and difficult part of their training should begin. They must be taught to quarter their ground properly, to obey their master's gestures, and be introduced to game.

On most pheasant shootings there are some points near the boundaries from which pheasants during the summer must be kept back. Driving the birds from such places with a young dog gives countless opportunities for most useful lessons in ranging and dropping to hand and wing. Fields also outside covert, late on a summer's evening, prove admirable training ground for puppies, as rabbits will then be found feeding far from their buries and willing to squat until the dog is almost upon them, and collar and check-cord will soon teach a dog not to chase.

Then comes the time when the trainer should kill something over his dog, and nothing forms a better introduction to this stage of the proceedings than a few pigeons placed under flower-pots in a field in which there is some cover. Here the dog should be made to quarter the ground, but be kept fairly close to his trainer, who, knowing where the pigeon is placed, can with little difficulty knock over the pot, see that the dog drops when the pigeon rises, and shoot at the bird. The bird should not be fired at unless the dog drops to wing, and it is by no means desirable that it should be invariably killed. If everything goes well and the bird is killed, the dog should then be allowed to retrieve it, and be well petted by his master. Very few pigeons should, however, be used, as the puppy will soon learn the meaning of the pots. In this, too, as in all other tricks, new ground should be used every day.

From this stage the dogs separately, and then in the team, should be introduced to game-shooting, first in the open, then in open covert, and finally in thick places where they cannot be seen.

The trainer must, however, for the first season be ready to sacrifice his shooting at any time to the good of his dogs. Consistent treatment, too, is absolutely necessary. The wonderful

discipline of a pack of hounds, which puts to shame that of most dogs used for shooting, is obtained by it, while the behaviour of the typical lap-dog is due to the want of it. If a Clumber is once allowed in the excitement of the moment to chase, without orders, a wounded bird, he will do so again. Dropping also must be rigorously enforced. It is in itself a confession of weakness, for it would be better if a dog could be made to stand rather than lie, and it is a duty which a dog is always trying to shirk.

Although, from this sketch, the training of a team of Clumbers may seem troublesome, the dog lover will find ample compensation for his trouble when the education is complete.

The writer, indeed, may be prejudiced, but it appears to him that the prospects of the spaniel are bright. In the South of England it is now impossible to work the setter and the pointer. The man, therefore, who likes to combine with his shooting the pleasure of watching his dogs work must have recourse to the spaniel. The Sporting Spaniel Club has recognised this fact by the introduction of Field Trials, which have already shown the public that a well-broken spaniel is not an impossibility.

The writer, in the accompanying photographs, has endeavoured to illustrate some points of the training which he has advised. In the first picture, *WAITING FOR THE GUNS*, his dogs have been dropped by the keeper, who thus keeps them from the perpetual self-hunting to which spaniels, when taken out in any number, are always addicted. The old Clumber, Bandy, who lies furthest but one from the keeper, has been exhibited at several good shows in the past, in which she has met with some success. When she first came into the writer's hands, she was decidedly gun-shy, but not hopelessly so, as she is now quite undisturbed by firing. She is the mother of the dog Betsy, who lies nearest to the keeper. The other three spaniels, Bob, Rock, and May, are of the same litter, and are about three years old. None of these spaniels have been



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BETSY RETRIEVING.

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exhibited, although they are pedigree dogs, the sire of Betsy being Alveley Logic, and the sire of the other three Rob, who was second to Baillie Friar at the Crystal Palace Show last autumn.

Betsy, who in the second photograph is being sent to fetch a dead rabbit, is the best retriever, although May, who in another photograph is delivering up a rabbit, has an equally light mouth. Both these dogs will carry an egg without breaking it, and they have given, in their early days, more than one duckling

a precarious but harmless ride.

The picture of BETSY RETRIEVING the rabbit was obtained with some difficulty, as the light was too bad to allow of instantaneous photography, and the delighted wriggle of a retrieving spaniel was altogether too much for the slower process. The last picture represents BOB AND BETSY, who with Bandy are the prettiest workers. They have been dropped and left by their master, a thing which all Clumbers should be broken to. Unfortunately, in photography it is almost impossible to prevent the markings on white dogs from coming out too dark, which to some extent has occurred in this illustration. In all other respects, however, it must be admitted that the reproductions of the photographs are admirable likenesses of the dogs.



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BOB AND BETSY.

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of colour in the lowlands, may be brought into the home garden, reproducing those irregular groups and colonies Nature shows.

FLOWERS IN THE WOODLAND AT KEW.

The sweetest time of the year in the great National Garden at Kew is April and May, when the woodland is sprinkled with Daffodils and Bluebells. A film of blue overspreads the distant view, a sea of soft colouring from a million fragrant flowers in the grass. And during the past few years this phase of gardening has been extended, and delightful results attained. It is time well spent if those who contemplate extending flower-gardening in the grass can visit the gardens at this season, when the Daffodils and Tulips are not merely in the beds, one variety in each bed, but in broad groups either in the grass or beneath the branches of deciduous and dark plummy Firs. One mass was full of colour and interest. The sweet-smelling Campernelle Jonquil is naturalised in a thin plantation of Birch and other trees, and varied by groups of the dwarf Furze, golden with colour at the same time. This Campernelle Jonquil is largely used beneath the thinly-planted trees, on the fringes of the shrubbery, and in bold masses by some Araucaria group, which throws into intense relief the deep yellow of the flowers. By the entrance from Kew Green many things are naturalised, and from early January until early summer something is there to gladden the garden. Numerous plants may be naturalised in the grass, and it is not needful to confine the flowers to the Daffodil. It is more interesting to see variety, as in the upland meadows, dyed with subtle tints from the host of blossoms colouring the grass:

Winter Aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*).

Bellflower (*Campanula*). The finer kinds, such as *C. Hosti*, *C. Rapunculus*, *C. latifolia*. Asphodel.

Bee Balm (a bright scarlet flower, known as *Monarda didyma*, delighting in moist spots). Crane's-bill (true *Geraniums*).

Crocus, not forgetting the deep blue purple *C. speciosus*.

Cyclamen. Daffodil. Day Lily (*Hemerocallis*). Forget-me not.

Globe-flowers (*Trollius*). These are most happy in damp places.

Grape Hyacinth (*Muscari*). Many shades of blue amongst these.

The deep purple *M. conicum* is worth planting freely where the grass is not very thick. Phlox.

Scillas, *S. italica*, *S. campanulata* in its several shades, and the Bluebell (*S. nutans*) and its forms.

Snake's-head. This is the Fritillary of English meadows, so abundant in the Oxfordshire meads. Its name is *F. Meleagris*. Snow-drop.

Snowflake, both spring and summer, *Leucojum vernum* and *L. aestivum*.

Solomon's Seal, very charming in shady places.

Star of Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum*).

Tulip, especially the long floreted kinds, *T. acuminata*, *T. suaveolens*, the wild Tulip, *T. linifolia*, and the Lady Tulip (*T. Clusiana*). Valerian.

Anemone (Windflower). One need hardly describe this dainty family, as the majority of Anemones may be freely naturalised, especially the Apennine and Wood Windflowers, not forgetting the soft-coloured *Robinsoniana*.

Trillium (Wood Lily). This may frequently be naturalised where the grass is thin and the place is moist.

Saxifraga. The meadow Saxifrage or Rockfoil (*S. granulata*), a native plant, succeeds well in the grass. Peonies.

Chrysanthemum *Leucanthemum*, the Ox-eye Daisy. This is too often a plague, and sufficiently established without introducing more of it into the woodland.

THE POET'S NARCISSUS IN THE GRASS.

At Kew the Poet's Narcissus is very beautiful during the early days of May. It is a fair flower indeed to plant largely in the grass, not only in the shrubbery recess or the orchard, but in the meadow, where in time it will form itself into little cloud-like colonies, resembling drifts of snow in the moonlight. Winding colonies in the meadow, not mere masses, are pleasurable at all times, and their rich perfume is borne into the house itself. The whole air seems saturated with fragrance. In the Royal Gardens the Poet's Narcissus seems everywhere, fluttering beneath Fir trees, planted thinly in the woodland, and thickly massed in the pleasure grounds, or sprinkling, with the Star and Trumpet groups, the shady slopes of the Cumberland Mound, where at the base Japan Primrose, Wood Windflowers, Cyclamens, Hepaticas, and other flowers are naturalised, sometimes in groups by themselves, and occasionally associated



FLOWER-GARDENING IN THE GRASS.

IN the springtime of the year flowers gem the meadow with colour: the Snake's-head Fritillary lifts its chequered bell in the lush mead, where Kingcups or Marsh Marygolds cluster thickly, and the tint of Lady Smocks is seen through the grass. Sometimes the meadow is a sea of Daffodils, dancing in the wind, and almost hiding the green blade. An illustration such as is given here suggests that this beautiful flower-colouring should be brought nearer the house, and varied by planting things not found in the country around. There are many phases of flower-gardening in the grass. It may be a meadow that one wishes to plant, or some cool shady drive, little leafy recesses by the shrubbery, or perhaps an orchard, seeking in each instance the bulbs most likely to succeed. An old orchard is a happy place for the flowers of spring. Around the base of the trees Daffodils may be freely planted—Trumpet, Star, and Poet's—with the spring Snowflake for variety, the flowers like dainty Snowdrops poised on tall



WILD DAFFODILS IN A WOOD.

stems. This planting of bulbous flowers will not injure the trees, and a charming grouping of colour is there in the early year. When the Apple is covered with bloom, the Daffodils raise their chaliced flowers to meet the burden of pink veiling the brown branches, and a fresh pleasure is revealed to all who believe that gardening does not end in filling certain beds or borders with exotics and perennials. The fair world of bulbous flowers is filled with precious things, and in grassland their daintiness and freshness are pleasant. When flower-gardening in the grass is properly done, the meadow of course is not mown until the leaves of the bulbs have withered, and when one can wait beautiful groups are possible. The fair beauty of the high Alpine meadows, or the brave stretches

with hardy Ferns. This Narcissus seems very vigorous, and its reasonable price admits of many using it in thousands for naturalising.

PLANTING OUT SUMMER FLOWERS.

The last week in May for the hardier bedding plants, and the first days of June for things of more delicate growth, are the best times for planting out the summer exotics. Before doing so thoroughly harden the growth by exposing it as much as possible, only keeping the frame lights on at night-time, otherwise the plants will suffer when transferred to the open garden. The sites may, however, be prepared, the beds made ready, and everything marked out so that the work can proceed without delay when June arrives. Calceolarias are as hardy as any of the summer bedders, and as a rule sub-tropicals, Castor-oil plants and things of like character the most tender, affected either by cold winds or frosts. A good use should be made of the Cactus Dahlias, selecting the brightest colours, and these need a rich soil, not saturated with manure, but placing this deep down, so that the roots can find it when sustenance is really required. It is a great mistake to sour the garden by recklessly filling it with manure, which frequently only produces rank growth at the expense of flowers. Far better to give stimulants in the form of liquid manure afterwards, and avoid masses of crude rank manure coming into contact with the roots.

ANNUAL FLOWERS IN SUCCESSION.

It is not yet too late to sow annual flowers, though books usually give March and April as the correct seasons for this work. But it is not wise to sow everything at once, and this year those who have sown late will benefit. The weather has been too wet and cold to encourage the growth of seedlings.

By sowing in succession flowers are scattered throughout the summer and autumn, not confined merely to one or two months. Books so often mention that March or early April is about the only time for seed sowing. This is well enough when one display is necessary, but not if, as in the case of Sweet Peas, one desires the flowers as long as possible.

THE MAY TULIPS.

This name may be applied to those glorious Tulips of the Gesners' race which make brilliant masses of colour in the garden at this time. Many notes have been written in COUNTRY LIFE about the richness and effectiveness of this race when boldly planted, and in the sunlight of a May day nothing in the whole world of flowers is more wonderful in colouring. This may appear a hysterical statement, but in few gardens, as yet, are these Tulips planted in large beds, one kind in a bed, as in the Royal Gardens, Kew. The bulbs are not expensive, and the results are in every way more satisfying than in the case of the earlier and familiar Dutch varieties. The Gesners' or May Tulips are tall, straight, and strong, with big stout petals which open out wide in the sun, and show a velvety violet base against deep crimson. Fulgens, elegans, the fragrant Macrospila, the yellow Retroflexa, Golden Eagle, and the purest colours amongst the Darwin or late Tulips, add a fresh interest to the garden after the Daffodils have gone. It is only by constantly writing about a noble family of plants that its culture is furthered. The May Tulips are becoming more known, but as yet there are thousands of gardens into which they have never entered.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are always pleased to assist our readers in matters concerning the garden.



FALCONRY . . A Flight at a Lark.



SHE looks very fit and well this afternoon, does Queenie, after her hard work yesterday and her morning bath and the long toilette she made after it, pluming herself in the sun and wind as she sat on her padded block on the lawn behind the house; and very heavy does she feel on the fist as she is carried out along the gritty flint road which leads from our village up a long hill to the



E. Madge.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

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open country. It is half-an-hour before we get to a spot where we are clear enough of obstacles to be sure of a good flight. But at last the vexatious patch of standing barley which we passed on the road is three-quarters of a mile to our rear. In front of us, to windward, the nearest impediment is a patch of gorse; but this is nearly half a mile away. To the right, further still, across a wide, sloping valley, is a thick clump of fir; and to the left, on the distant crest of the next undulating down, is a fringe of bushes. It will be a good lark which can make its way to either of these

refuges. As we step off the high road on to the springy turf, the short jesses attached to Queenie's feet are unhooked from the swivel, and thus the leash is detached. The little hawk stands on the fist, confined only by two short, thin straps, of which the ends are grasped between the falconer's finger and thumb. She seems to know that the hour of battle is at hand, and, after a look up at her master's face, gives herself a vigorous shake, which makes the strong feathers of her wings and tail rustle like a silk dress.

And now our party, ranged in rather close order, walk steadily up wind in search of a down lark, always more valiant and better able to fly than he of the stubbles or clover. Very keenly the little hawk scans the ground on all sides, on the look-out for the first feather that moves. Presently a hare gets up 40yds. away. She half starts, but, seeing what it is, restrains her impatience and sits still again.

Suddenly with a great bound she throws herself headlong forward. A lark has silently jumped up 20yds. ahead, and is scudding away at a sharp pace. In a moment he sees the hawk, and begins a loud crowing as he puts on all steam and heads for the upper regions. Better save your breath, my good sir; you will want it all when you find Queen behind you in the clouds up above. The little falcon, once on the wing, adopts the same tactics as the quarry, and begins to mount. There is no attempt this time to make or elude stoops on the flat. Both birds know that the struggle will be decided in the upper air. There is a long journey before them, and they make their plans accordingly. The lark, finding that he can get no "way" on as he breasts the wind, takes a turn down wind over our heads, and is now on the other side of us, above the hawk, which is still in front, and looking down at her. It is almost as if he had got into position for a stoop at the hawk. But this position only lasts a second, for now the hawk in her turn has a journey down wind; only, instead of going 80yds. in it, she goes 300yds. Flying at a tearing rate, just as if she was bound for the village whence we came, she appears to be raking right away from the quarry, while the lark, still facing up wind, toils on uninterruptedly in his upward path. At length the hawk turns, and begins to mount in nearly the same way as the lark. There they are, struggling upwards with all their might, the pursued distant a long bow-shot from the pursuer, and neither apparently paying any regard whatever to the other. Seen from a distance they must look like small paper kites and we as the people flying them. The heads of both point nearly straight up wind; but as they mount they are wafted backwards, so that we have to walk fast, and even run sometimes, to keep pace with the leeway they make.

The lark is evidently looking about him for the safest place of refuge, in case he should have to undergo the humiliation of

seeking one. At first he seems to be edging over towards the thick clump across the valley; but the more he turns his head that way, the more decidedly does Queen direct her flight on that side, as if to cut off that line of escape. At another time the most keen-sighted of the lookers-on can see his glance directed wistfully towards a rough patch on the open down, where some scraggy thistles and a group of uncomely nettles offer a tempting but precarious shelter. In the end, after a brief glance at the distant hedgerow, he keeps straight on, breasting the wind with quick-moving wings and occasional trills of song, as if to keep up his courage. "After all," thinks he, "the hawk is a long way down wind, and still hardly on a level with me. Perhaps she won't persevere at all; and, even if she does, have I not a hundred shifts and twists and turns to make, some of which will throw her out and put me once more on a higher level, to which she will have to laboriously mount again? It will then be time, when matters have become really serious, and when I am still higher in the air, to choose which of the distant harbours it will be best to make for."

So they go up and up. We stand still, with eyes upturned till our necks ache. Our eyes are strained to keep the lark in sight. Now he is a mere dot; now a faint speck against the white cloud above; and now he is lost to sight altogether. Not so the hawk, which, like a tiny swallow, moves on with fast twinkling wings. But she also is fast diminishing in size. Just as she seems to be disappearing from our sight a change occurs. There is a shout from the falconer, and, at the same time, with a quite different motion, just like a shooting star, she passes rapidly across the sky from the white patch of cloud to its darker side; and this straight-forward dash ends in a big curve upwards.

We can see the flash of her two wings, one quite dark and one quite light, in the gleaming sunshine; then a pause for half a second while she hangs motionless as if suspended from the cloud, and then another straight dash in quite a different direction, ending in another great upward bend. Each of these stoops has brought her very much nearer to us, for she looks perceptibly bigger, even after that swift rebound, as she hangs again in the upper air. Now, too, we can see the lark again; he has come down several hundred feet under those dangerous stoops, but even as we catch sight of him he shoots up again bravely just as the hawk did.

And now a new actor comes upon the scene. From somewhere on our left a fast-flying bird is seen making at full speed to the aerial field of battle. "Here is the wild merlin," shouts someone; and so it is. Very black does the new-comer look,

and very angrily does she seem to move as she hurries up. She is still below Queen, who is gathering herself up for her third stoop; but she is well above the lark, and without any pause she dashes at the latter like a descending arrow on its way to the target. She has missed; but the lark, in avoiding the blow, has had to fall again at least 200ft., and is full in sight, labouring upwards and onwards still.

The wild merlin, having missed her shot, throws up just as Queen did. Buoyant as corks, the three birds seem to use the air as a sort of elastic cushion. Every atom that is left of the downward impetus with which the one made, and the other avoided, the stoop is utilised to help the rebound upwards. Instinct, more skilful than science, teaches both the pursuer and the pursued how best to use the wind as a motive force to lift and waft them up. The lark, hard pressed, but by no means

helpless, now abandons all thought of the safer refuges in the distance. He spreads all sail for the once-despised patch of thistles. It is only 300yds. off, and he is still more than 300ft. high. A few seconds more mounting, or even of level flying, and then a long, slanting descent at his best pace will bring him there.

Too late, alas! Before two seconds have elapsed, Queen, from her lofty place of vantage, starts for her third stoop. We can see it perfectly, a quarter of a mile ahead of us—a long, oblique line, with wings half closed, converging on the shorter line taken by the quarry. But this larger and stronger line, coming from above, is being twice as quickly traversed as the lower and thinner line which marks the course of the pursued. They will surely meet well before the cover is reached. Both lines begin to waver wildly as they approach one another. There has been a desperate shift downwards and then upwards;

but Queen has been equal to the occasion. As the thin line curves and bends, so does the thick line behind. Quickly but surely it nears the other—it is close up to it—it joins. As the hawk turns upwards her speed slackens as if retarded by a drag. Something hangs for a second dangling below her; it is the fluttering wings and tail of her prey. Then she seems to tuck up under her this pendent bunch of feathers, and, spreading her wings broad, takes a wide sweep round, and descends slowly and lightly on the open down, 30yds. only from the very clump of thistles which was to have saved her quarry.

And what of the wild merlin? She was just steadying herself for her second stoop when Queen made her third; and now she hangs on, apparently in two minds whether to come down and claim her share of the spoil or not. She could easily catch Queen, weighted as she is, even if Queen attempted to



E. Madge.

COMPANIONS.

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make off. But it is often a point of honour among wild hawks not to squabble over booty fairly won by a rival. Moreover, the one look which Queen casts upward does not bode a very meek reception to any intruder. Finally, my lady can see us all moving up. She heard the cheers with which we greeted each stoop, including her own, and the loud "who-whoop" which announced the capture of the lark. So, after making two short and rather angry circles on the other side of Queen, she sheers off slowly, and wings her way to the upper air again, where we watch her soaring irregularly until she fades away into the dark side of a cloud.

Queenie meanwhile sits motionless on the open down. We all know better than to go too near. Cigars are lighted or relighted. The little hawk is in no hurry to begin her meal. She is getting her breath, after two minutes' travelling at a rate compared with which the speed of race-horses is a snail's pace. Presently the falconer, muttering words of encouragement or commendation, "makes in" cautiously but confidently. Now



Hensman. THE HAWK AND HER MASTER. Copyright

he pauses, to be sure from Queenie's manner that she is not going to bolt. Now he goes on again—he is close up—he stoops down, and Queenie, with her head on one side, looks up in his face. He puts out his gloved hand with a dainty morsel held in it. He kneels down beside Queenie, and, after a minute's pause, rises with the little hawk on his left hand and something invisible in his right. Now we may go up. We find Queen no longer hesitating, but busily engaged with her well-earned feast on the gloved fist. Then the falconer, stretching out his right arm behind his back, shows us peeping out from the palm of his clenched hand the head of a live lark. He has saved the quarry alive. Queenie had hold of it by the shoulder, the other foot being on the ground; she had not touched the lark with her beak, nor had her talon done more than pierce the fleshy part of the wing below the shoulder. When we get back the lark will be transferred to the handsome cage which our host had provided on the strength of a promise that the first lark saved alive should be presented to him.

Queen will not fly again to-day. This one flight was so good, and ended so triumphantly for the trained hawk, that we will not risk the chance of spoiling it by a worse one to follow. "Leave well alone" is as good a maxim in falconry as in most other arts and crafts; and a better flight could scarcely be seen. Although only four stoops were made, each one was worth half-

a-dozen such as one usually sees. The first three were so swift and well-aimed that they brought down an old cock lark from a height of something like half a mile to within a few hundred feet of the ground. And the fourth put a brilliant finish—all in favour of the trained hawk—to a flight which was first single and then double. Had the lark avoided the last blow, he would either have been picked up by the wild merlin as he dived under the nettles, or taken therein by one or both hawks, for they afforded a meagre cover. At any rate, we should have routed him out for Queen, who would doubtless have bested him the second time more easily than the first. But people like to see the quarry taken in the air; it is, indeed, a more skilful and artistic ending to a flight.

So Queen is fed up, and consigned to her little block behind the rick where our head-marker is posted. We start with other merlins in search of other flights, but to Queen belong the honours of the day—perhaps of the whole season; for of the hundred flights that this little hawk has flown since she began her work as a novice on August 10th she has flown no better or more successful one than this.

Good-bye, Queenie! A few short days and you will have seen the last of your hood and leash. You will be turned out to fly your own flights in your own way at larks found by yourself. May you never fly one worse than this! And may you, by some good luck, escape the cruel gun of the unsportsmanlike sportsman, which is your only danger. E. B. M.

OBSERVATIONS OF A FIELD NATURALIST.

THE TREE-SPARROW.

IS any part of the alleged multiplication of the house-sparrow in rural districts really due to an increase in numbers of the tree-sparrow? The question is suggested partly by the undoubted fact that the tree-sparrow is much commoner in many places than it used to be, and partly by the remark made to me by a miller near Windsor, to the effect that of late years nearly all the sparrows about his place seemed to be cock birds. The same remark is often made by visitors to India in the Himalayas; for the Himalayan sparrow and the English tree-sparrow have both sexes coloured alike, and closely resembling a rather brilliantly-marked male house-sparrow. I suspect, therefore, that some of the miller's sparrows were tree-sparrows. The way to distinguish between the tree-sparrow and the cock sparrow of the gutter is to look at the *crown* of the head. In the latter this is grey, with deep chestnut on each side; in the tree-sparrow the crown is uniform dark chestnut. Even with this guide, however, it is not easy anywhere to apportion any substantial share in the "sparrow nuisance" to the tree-sparrow. In a twenty-mile ride across country the other day I looked at every sparrow encountered, several hundreds probably, and not a tree-sparrow among them.

EXPOSED NESTS.

Another proof that blackbirds and thrushes have grown much more numerous in consequence of the Wild Birds' Protection Acts is to be found, I think, in the absurdly conspicuous and inappropriate places in which many of these birds now build their nests. The male blackbird is, as everyone knows, jealous as a Frenchman of his "sphere of influence" during the nesting season, and the younger pairs of birds appear to be driven from the shrubberies and hedges to build where they can. This year one luckless pair selected the bare fork of an apple tree against a wall close by one of our garden paths; and there they built a nest that no one could fail to see at 30yds. They were protected, and the eggs came near hatching, when some creature, probably a cat, pulled half of the nest out of the fork one night and spilled the eggs on the ground. A week had scarcely passed before a pair of thrushes built their nest upon the ruins of the blackbirds' nest, and are now sitting upon eggs at the top of a structure about 8in. high. Perhaps they may be left in peace, for surely no sensible cat could suspect such a haystack of being a nest.

THE POWER OF CHILDHOOD.

There would almost seem to be a magic fascination about some children, which enables them to catch with their hands wild creatures that a man cannot even approach. The other day I took from my youngest son, aged six, a song-thrush, quite active and uninjured, which he had caught on the lawn. His explanation was that it was "hopping about," and he "went very carefully after it and caught it." When released, it flew strongly away. I know a little girl, too, whose favourite pastime at the age of five was to sit quietly near a mouse-hole, wait till the mouse came out, and catch it! It would puzzle an adult to do such a thing.

CONTEMPT OF TRAPS.

But wild creatures often have surprisingly pronounced ideas as to the comparative magnitude of dangers. A partridge hunted by a hawk will fly to a man; and a great tit which has once been caught in a trap and released will sometimes become a regular nuisance by getting caught in the same trap every time it is baited and set for other birds. In the same way, a dormouse which has been freshly caught will sometimes adopt his cage as his home. In one case I knew a dormouse who was always at home fast asleep all day in a large tin box with a small box for his bed inside it. It was only by accident that the discovery was made that he spent all his nights at liberty. He could jump out of the box, and wandered about the conservatory until returning daylight warned him that it was bedtime, when he would scramble into his "cage" again and go to sleep.

A MOTHERS' MEETING.

I had the luck to witness a pretty instance of the maternal affection of cattle the other day. In a long field of irregular hour-glass shape about thirty cows were gathered on some rising ground in one corner, all staring intently in the same direction. I looked, but could see nothing except that a bend of the road was just visible from that corner. Presently I heard the thunder of many hoofs, and all the cows were galloping down the long side of the hedge to the opposite corner. Their calves had just turned the bend of the road, and this corner was the next place they would pass. There was sense as well as affection in this manœuvre.

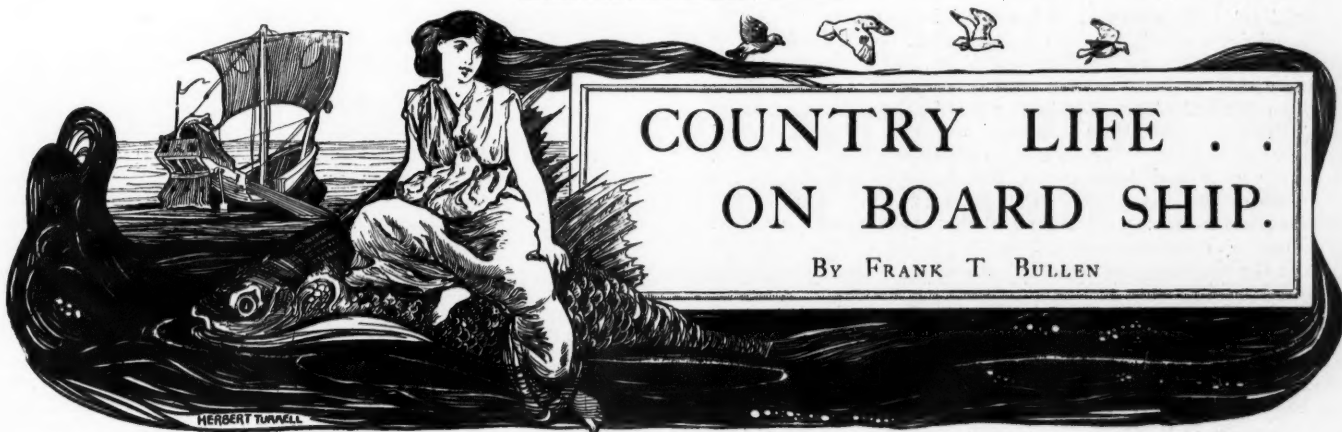
LAND BIRDS IN WATER.

I have before noticed that starlings are sometimes to be seen at Chelsea wheeling over the surface of the Thames and stooping every now and then, like gulls, to pick something off

the surface of the water; and I remember as a boy seeing some sparrows which had chased a fat-bodied moth over a paddock into a pond dash into the water after it, their leader emerging triumphant with the moth in its bill. Similarly, I have several times near Richmond seen some tame pigeons hovering over the surface of the water and taking something thence, whether food or water I have never been near enough to discover. In spite of this I was surprised the other day to see a half bred fantail pigeon actually sitting on some still water in ornamental grounds, and to be told that the bird frequently did so. It floated with as much ease, apparently, as a gull, and carried its head and tail both raised high above the water. When disturbed, it flapped and swam a little way, and then rose from the water without difficulty and flew. The explanation of this habit probably is that swans and ducks are fed, and overfed, at this spot, and that the pigeon had found abundance of food floating in the water after the water-fowl had finished.

ANIMAL AQUATICS.

But more creatures, probably, take to the water occasionally than we suppose. On most streams near towns what are called water-rats are usually common rats which have taken to the water-side for a living, and swim backwards and forwards across the stream whenever they feel inclined. The hare takes to the water also, and swims long distances, apparently for the pleasure of swimming. But a pig hardly seems a more "unlikely bird" than the bat an improbable fish; yet our common bats can swim with ease, using a measured, oaring stroke that suggests experience. In Gloucestershire, village boys sometimes amuse themselves with long rods, knocking down into the water the bats which fly under a bridge, and watching them swim ashore. The bat always seems to fall upon the water the right way up, with wings half-outstretched upon the surface. E. K. R.



FOR the first time that voyage an attempt was made to confine a portion of our farm-stock within a pen, instead of allowing them to roam at their own sweet will about the decks. For the skipper still cherished the idea that milk for tea and coffee might be obtained from the two goats that would be palatable, if only their habit of promiscuous grazing could be stopped. So the carpenter rigged up a tiny corral beneath the fore-castle deck, and there, in penitential gloom, the goats were confined, and fed like all the rest of the animals, on last voyage's biscuit and weevily pease. Under these depressing conditions there was, of course, only one thing left for self respecting goats to do—refuse to secrete any more milk. They promptly did so; so promptly, in fact, that on the second morning the utmost energies of the steward only sufficed to squeeze out from the sardonic pair about half-a-dozen teaspoonfuls of doubtful-looking fluid. This sealed their fate, for we had far too much stock on board to waste any portion of our provender upon non-producers, and the fiat went forth—the drones must die. Some suggestion was made by a member of the after guard as to the possibility of the crew not objecting to goat as a change of diet; but with all the skipper's boldness, he did not venture to make the attempt. The goats were slain, their hides were saved for chafing gear, sheaths for knives, etc., but, with the exception of a portion that was boiled down with much disgust by the cook and given to the fowls, most of the flesh was flung overboard. Then general complaints arose that while musk was a pleasant perfume taken in moderation, a little of it went a very long way, and that two musk deer might be relied upon to provide as much scent in one day as would suffice all hands for a year. I do not know how it was done, but two days after the demise of the goats the deer also vanished. Still we could not be said to enjoy much room to move about on deck yet. We had 200 fowls and forty ducks roaming at large, and although many of the former idiotic birds tried their wings, with the result of finding the outside of the ship a brief and uncer-

tain abiding-place, the state of the ship's decks was still utterly abominable. A week of uninterrupted fine weather under the blazing sun of the Bay of Bengal had made everyone but the skipper heartily sick of sea-farming, and consequently it was with many pleasurable anticipations that we noted the first increase in the wind that necessitated a reduction of sail. It made the fellows quite gay to think of the clearance that would presently take place. The breeze freshened steadily all night, and in the morning it was blowing a moderate gale, with an ugly cross sea, which, with the Belle's well-known clumsiness, she was allowing to break aboard in all directions. By four bells there were many gaps in our company of fowls. Such a state of affairs robbed them of the tiny modicum of gumption they had ever possessed, and every little breaking sea that lolloped inboard drove some of them, with strident outcry, to seek refuge overboard. Presently came what we had been expecting all the morning—one huge mass of water extending from the break of the poop to the fore-castle, which filled the decks rail high, fore and aft. Proceedings were exceedingly animated for a time. The ducks took very kindly to the new arrangement at first, sailing joyously about, and tasting the bitter brine as if they rather liked the flavour. But they were vastly puzzled by the incomprehensible motions of the whole mass of water under them; it was a phenomenon transcending all their previous aquatic experiences. The fowls gave the whole thing up, floating languidly about like worn-out feather brooms upon the seething flood of water, and hardly retaining enough energy to struggle when the men, splashing about like a crack team in a water-polo match, snatched at them and conveyed them in heaps to a place of security under the fore-castle. That day's breeze got rid of quite two-thirds of our feathered friends for us, what with the number that had flown or been washed overboard and those unfortunates who had died in wet heaps under the fore-castle. The old man was much annoyed, and could by no means understand the unwonted cheerfulness of

everybody else. But, economical to the last, he ordered the steward to slay as many of the survivors each day as would give every man one body apiece for dinner, in lieu of the usual rations of salt beef or pork. This royal command gave all hands great satisfaction, for it is a superstition on board ship that to feed upon chicken is the height of epicurean luxury. Dinner-time, therefore, was awaited with considerable impatience; in fact, a good deal of sleep was lost by the watch below over the prospect of such an unusual luxury. I went to the galley as usual, my mouth watering like the rest, but when I saw the dirty little Maltese cook harpooning the carcasses out of the coppers, my appetite began to fail me. He carefully counted into my kid one corpse to each man, and I silently bore them into the fore-castle to the midst of the gaping crowd. Ah me! how was their joy turned into sorrow, their sorrow into rage, by the rapidest of transitions. She was a hungry ship at the best of times, but when things had been at their worst they had never quite reached the present sad level. It is hardly possible to imagine what that feast looked like. An East Indian jungle fowl is by no means a fleshy bird when at its best, but these poor wretches had been living upon what little flesh they wore when they came on board for about ten days, the scanty ration of paddy and broken biscuit having been insufficient to keep them alive. And then they had been scalded wholesale, the feathers roughly wiped off them, and plunged into a copper of furiously bubbling sea-water, where they had remained until the wooden-headed Maltese judged it time to fish them out and send them to be eaten. They were just like ladies' bustles covered with old parchment, and I have serious doubts whether more than half of them were drawn. I dare not attempt to reproduce the comments of my starving shipmates, unless I gave a row of dashes which would be suggestive but not enlightening. Old Nat the Yankee, who was the doyen of the fore-castle, was the first to recover sufficiently from the shock to formulate a definite plan of action. "In my 'pinion," he said, "thisyer's 'bout reached th' bottom notch. I kin stan' bein' starved; in these yer limejuicers a feller's got ter stan' that, but I be 'tarnally dod-gasted ef I kin see bein' starved 'n' insulted at the same time by the notion ov bein' bloated with lugsury. I'm goin' ter take thisyer kid full o' bramley-kites aft an' ask th' ole man ef he don't think it's 'bout time somethin' wuz said an' done by th' croo ov this hooker." There was no dissentient voice heard, and solemnly as a funeral procession, Nat leading the way with the corpses delicti, the whole watch tramped aft. I need not dwell upon the interview. Sufficient that there was a good deal of animated conversation, and much jeering on the skipper's part at the well-known cussedness of sailors, who, as everybody knows (or think they know), will growl if fed on all the delicacies of the season served up on 18-carat plate. But we got no more poultry, thank Heaven. And I do not think the officers regretted the fact that before we got clear of the bay the last of that sad crowd of feathered bipeds had ceased to worry any of us, but had wisely given up the attempt to struggle against such a combination of trying circumstances.

The herd of swine, however, thrrove apace. To the manner born, nothing came amiss to them, and I believe they even enjoyed the many quaint tricks played upon them by the monkeys, and the ceaseless antagonism of the dogs. But the father of the family was a sore trial to our energetic carpenter. Chips had a sneaking regard for pigs, and knew more than anybody on board about them; but that big boar, he said, made him commit more sin with his tongue in one day than all the other trying details of his life put together. For Denis's tusks grew amazingly, and his chief amusement consisted in rooting about until he found a splinter in the decks underneath which he could insert a tusk. Then he would lie down or crouch on his knees, and fidget away at that sliver of pine until he had succeeded in ripping a long streak up; and if left undisturbed for a few minutes he would gouge quite a large hollow out of the deck. No ships' decks that ever I saw were so full of patches as ours were, and despite all our watchfulness they were continually increasing. It became a regular part of the carpenter's duties to capture Denis periodically by lassoing him, lash him up to the pin-rail by his snout, and with a huge pair of pincers snap off those fast-growing tusks as close down to the jaw as possible. In spite of this heroic treatment, Denis always seemed to find enough of tusk left to rip up a sliver of deck if ever he could find a quiet corner; and the carpenter was often heard to declare that the cunning beast was a lineal descendant of a survivor of the demon-possessed herd of Gadara.

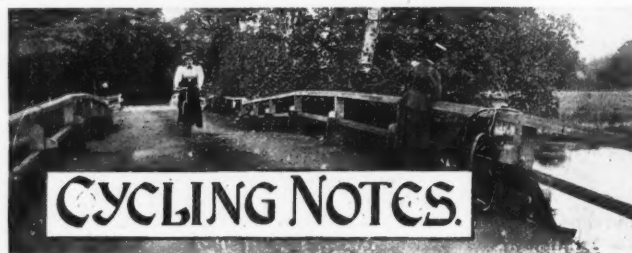
In the case of the pigs, though, there were compensations. By the time we arrived off Mauritius, a rumour went round that on Friday a pig was to be killed, and great was the excitement. The steward swelled with importance, as armed with the cabin carving-knife, he strode forward and selected two of the first litter of piglets, the Bombay born, for sacrifice. He had plenty of voluntary helpers from the watch below, who had no fears for the quality of this meat, and only trembled at the thought that perchance the old man might bear malice in the matter of the fowls and refuse to send any pork in our direction. Great was

the uproar as the chosen ones were seized by violent hands, their legs tied with spun-yarn, and their throats exposed to the stern purpose of the steward. Unaware that the critical eye of Chips was upon him, he made a huge gash across the victim's throat, and then plunged the knife in diagonally until the whole length of the blade disappeared. "Man alive," said Chips; "ye're sewerly daft. Thon's nae wye to stick a pig. If ye haena shouldert the puir beastie A'am a hog mysel'." "You mind your own business, Carpenter," replied the steward, with dignity; "I don't want anybody to show me how to do my work." "Gie me nane o' yer impidence, ye feckless loun," shouted Chips. "A'am tellin' ye thon's spilin' gude meat for want o' juist a wee bit o' knowin' how. Hae! lat me show ye if ye're thick heid's able to tak' onythin' in ava." And so speaking, he brushed the indignant steward aside, at the same time drawing his pocket-knife. The second pig was laid out, and Chips, as delicately as if performing tracheotomy, slit his weasand. The black puddings were not forgotten, but I got such a distaste for that particular delicacy from learning how they were made (I hadn't the slightest idea before) that I have never been able to touch one since.

Chips now took upon himself the whole direction of affairs, and truly he was a past-master in the art and mystery of the pork-butcher. He knew just the temperature of the water, the happy medium between scalding the hair on and not scalding it off; knew, too, how to manipulate chitterlings and truss the carcase up till it looked just as if hanging in a first-class pork-shop. But the steward was sore displeased. For it is a prime canon of sea etiquette not to interfere with another man's work, and in the known incapacity of the cook, whose duty the pig-killing should ordinarily have been, the steward came next by prescriptive right. However, Chips, having undertaken the job, was not the man to give it up until it was finished, and by universal consent he had a right to be proud of his handiwork. That Sunday's dinner was a landmark, a date to reckon from, although the smell from the galley at supper-time on Saturday and breakfast-time on Sunday made us all quite faint and weak from desire, as well as fiercely resentful of the chaffy biscuit and filthy fragments of beef that were a miserable substitute for a meal with us.

But thenceforward the joy of good living was ours every Sunday until we reached home. Ten golden epochs, to be looked forward to with feverish longing over the six hungry days between each. And when off the Western Islands, Chips tackled the wicked old Madrassee sow single-handed, in the pride of his prowess allowing no one to help him, although she was nearly as large as himself—ah! that was the culminating point. Such a feast was never known to any of us before, for in spite of her age she was succulent and sapid, and, as the Irish say, there was "lashins and lavins." When we arrived in the East India Docks, we still had, beside the two progenitors of our stock, eight fine young porkers, such a company as would have been considered a most liberal allowance on leaving home for any ship I have ever sailed in before or since. As for Denis and Jenny, I am afraid to estimate their giant proportions. They were not grossly fat, but enormously large—quite the largest pigs I have ever seen—and when they were lifted ashore by the hydraulic crane, and landed in the railway-truck for conveyance to Cellardyke, to taste the joys of country life on Captain Smith's farm, there was a rush of spectators from all parts of the dock to gaze open-mouthed upon these splendid specimens of ship-bred swine. But few could be got to believe that, eleven months before, the pair of them had been carried on board in one sack by an under-sized man, and that their sole sustenance had been "hard-tack" and pea-soup.

(To be continued.)



CYCLING NOTES.

IF my cycling experience has taught me anything, it is the desirability of effective brake power. The ability to ride fearlessly in almost all circumstances is a boon without price, and, given a cool head and a reasonable amount of skill in the steering, there are few hills in the United Kingdom which cannot be ridden down at a walking pace, thus avoiding the necessity of a dismount. This state of things, however, has not long been possible, and, it may be asked, what is the new factor in the situation which has made it so? The answer is, the invention of the rim brake, or rather the available opportunities for its more general use. It first made its appearance on an early free-wheel machine, namely, the Whippet; but its use was chiefly confined to the patrons of that particular mount and the free-wheel system alike. Of late, however, two startling developments have come to pass. One is the more general use of effective retarding power, preferably through rim brakes,

even duplicated on the same machine, and, secondly, the invention of the Bowden, Toby, Cooper, Hamilton, and other rim brakes not the property of an individual cycle-maker, but applicable to cycles generally. Of the efficacy of the rim brake, no one who has once used a properly-fitted pattern will have anything of a doubtful nature to urge. The grip upon the rim is marvellous, and all the maker and rider alike have to consider is, firstly, the reliable fitting of the brake itself, and, secondly, the ability of the machine to withstand its application. Under the former head I have had a good deal of experience, having not only used several rim brakes, but also had opportunities of observing the behaviour of those on other persons' machines.

Subject to certain exceptions, the results have been highly satisfactory. I have seen one or two Bowden brakes which have not been effectively fitted, but on the other hand I have two in constant use which are all that could be desired. The Cooper rim brake is not difficult to fit, but cannot be applied to safeties universally. As it is actuated by straight levers instead of a flexible wire, as in the case of the Bowden, it can only be fitted beneath the top tube of a man's safety, or along the lower main tube of the limited number of ladies' safeties which have no connecting strut between the upper and lower tubes. The only ladies' machines I can think of at this moment which would take the Cooper brake are the Royal Enfield, the Marples, and the Robinson and Price.

As regards the wheels, a rim brake is equally applicable to a Jointless or a Westwood rim, though each has its merits and demerits. The Westwood being comparatively flat, there is no fear of the rim brake spreading outwardly and coming over the edges; on the other hand, this rim is liable to be untrue concentrically. The Jointless rim, however, is a perfect circle, but as its surface is convex, it is necessary that the horseshoe or other device to which the brake-blocks are fitted should be of sufficient strength to avoid all possibility of any spreading action taking place. With respect to the strength of the rims, the ordinary types are strong enough to withstand the wear of the brake-blocks, but there is no harm in being on the safe side and ordering a slightly stouter section,

weighing only two or three ounces more, and thus reducing not only the possibility of the rim being weakened after many months of use, but also obviating any tendency of its becoming laterally untrue.

Mr. Coningsby Disraeli, M.P., has had a bad spill through the heedlessness of a lad who stepped into his front wheel. The accident is regrettable, but one is glad to learn, owing to its occurrence, that Mr. Disraeli has ceased to be a cycle-hater, and is now himself a wheelman. It seems only the other day that he spoke of cycles and cyclists in the House of Commons in terms that were all but opprobrious, and at that time he stood forth with especial prominence as a foe to the wheeling fraternity. His conversion is but typical, however, of the general change that has been overspreading the House of Commons and other bodies alike for some time past.

Less admirable than amusing is the persistency with which a limited section of the community continues to express its objections to cycles and cyclists by a demand for taxation or registration, as the case may be. The latest instance emanates from no less a city than Liverpool. At a recent meeting of the City Council the chairman of the Watch Committee was asked whether, "looking at the increasing number of accidents to pedestrians through cyclists, he would require, if he had the power, cyclists to register their cycles and carry a numbered plate." Thereupon Sir William Forwood, whose spirited action in connection with a Prescott prosecution will be in the recollection of many wheelmen, sarcastically asked the speaker whether it was not his desire to have a man walk in front of each cycle, carrying a red flag, whereat there was naturally much laughter. The chairman of the Watch Committee replied that he himself was of opinion that registration was desirable, and had brought the subject before the committee on several occasions, but "there were difficulties in the way." It would be interesting to know what the chairman would hope to gain by any attempt at registration, or how it would assist the enforcement of the law, which is already amply strong. Meanwhile, one may rest content in the belief that the "difficulties in the way" are far too great for even the chairman of the Liverpool Watch Committee to surmount.

THE PILGRIM.



"Why Smith Left Home."

"WHY Smith Left Home" is not of the class of entertainment which is very likely to appeal to the readers of COUNTRY LIFE, for it is of the most rough-and-tumble character. Nevertheless, the success of a very similar piece—"What Happened to Jones"—which ran at the Strand Theatre for months (it is not for us to enquire into the circumstances of its running or the financial results of it), renders worthy of attention the new farce by the same author, Mr. Broadhurst.

The affair is called a farce, but it is too inconsequent and formless even for that style of play—a style in which more liberties of construction may be taken, of course, than in any other. There should be at least some connecting thread, some vague link running even through farce; such a thread, such a link, is entirely lacking in "Why Smith Left Home." The incidents are undoubtedly funny, they undoubtedly make one laugh—but a clever Punch and Judy show will do that, or a couple of "knockabout" music-hall performers. So that, really, the American farce at the Strand does not come within the category of drama; it certainly does not demand analysis. All that one is called upon to do is to recite the fact that the extravagant antics of the people on the stage result in hilarity among the audience.

Smith is always going to leave home because he is under the thrall of a mother-in-law. The author, most ingeniously, strives for originality by making this mother-in-law not a mother-in-law, but an aunt-in-law. But the disguise is of the flimsiest; she has mother-in-law (farcical brand) writ large all over her. To all intents and purposes she is the usual stereotyped antediluvian wife's mother of the farcical drama. She makes Smith's life a burden to him in the orthodox way, and it is in the methods he adopts to rid himself of the incubus that the piece strikes a vein of irresponsible American humour, with the peculiar spontaneous inventiveness natural to the nationality of the author. There comes into the house an Irish "cook lady," who is also the secretary of the Domestic Union. She ruins the food, browbeats the whole house, and is generally impossible. When she is given notice she calls out the other domestics "on strike," warns her mistress that the affiliated Unions of tradesmen's assistants will render it impossible for the household to obtain the necessaries of daily life, and naturally wins all along the line. There is caricature in this of a real phase of modern

life sufficiently apposite to cause a thrill of sympathy to run through the audience, and to stamp this otherwise incoherent hotch-potch with a motive, a meaning, a purpose, and to give it the *cachet* of being "in the movement."

This "cook lady" cooks so atrociously that the husband enters into an alliance with her. Asking her if she "can do bad cooking any worse," and receiving satisfactory assurances from her in this regard, she is bidden to bring up all her batteries against the common enemy, the aunt. This succeeds up to a point; but the author apparently forgets all about this idea very soon, and sets us off on another tack. The husband, mistaking—really mistaking—one of the pretty domestics for his wife, her back being turned to him, kisses her. Naturally, his wife appears at the critical moment, and the expected denunciation comes in due course. But he is able to prove his innocence. Not so the husband of the aunt, held up by her to her niece's spouse as a model of all the connubial virtues. He also kisses the serving-maid, and he is unable to prove his innocence. This marks the beginning of the end; events begin to prove too strong for *Madame la tante*; and at last the conjugal atmosphere is cleared by her disappearance from the *ménage* Smith. Then Smith and his wife leave home on a belated honeymoon—and that is the reason why.

There is more in the Strand entertainment than this. There is one of those admirable companies to which we by this time look forward. They are examples of all that is best in the science of "stage management." There is no "star," no one working "off his own bat" for his own advancement, careless whether he is out of the picture, destroying its perspective, overriding everything and everybody else, robbing the play of all symmetry for the sake of his own glory. No; all are working for the success of the entire entertainment, wise enough to know that the success of the whole means the success of the parts—a state of affairs capable of mathematical proof. And so the thing goes "with a bang" from beginning to end. There is no hesitation, no slovenliness, but there is an impetus and a swing which nearly blinds one at times to the thinness and the poverty of the material upon which the actors are at work. The acting of Mr. Barnum as a German count almost persuades one to advise his readers to pay a visit to the Strand Theatre, so clever, so humorous, so original is it. Really, as actors of quaint character, the Americans are wonderful. A little too broad, insistent, and obvious is the method of Miss Annie Yeamans, one of America's most popular comedians, who played the "cook lady"; but there is no denying her power of winning laughter.

Mr. Arbuckle, as Smith, is also a little too pronounced for our taste, but he, too, achieved his end and made the pittites roar. It is not, you see, so much by individual excellence that these Transatlantic players score, but by the perfection of the *ensemble* of their performances, the admirable dovetailing of them. A curiously quaint and pleasing and quietly effective method is that of Miss Usner as the scheming parlour-maid—quite a charming little study. Full of spirit and vivacity was Mrs. Smith, as represented by Miss Siroux.

DRAMATIC NOTES.

ALL the novelties have now been produced, and the season, though in full swing, has nothing more that is new to offer us, except the important production at the Court of Mr. Carton's comedy. Reference has been made in this place to the triumph of modern comedy once again. It has swept everything before it, and we hope that Mr. Carton's essentially modern "Wheels within Wheels" will sustain the rule. Swords and lucklers are under a temporary eclipse, and I do not think anyone is sorry that it should be so.

In a chat with Mr. George Alexander recently, he humorously accused me of turning my coat. "This time last year," he said with truth, "you were all the other way, egging the whole world on to 'Romance.'" I pointed out that this was quite true—but it *was* last year. Since then we have had very little else than "Romance." There is hardly a theatre of importance which has not resounded with the clash of swords and been rendered brilliant by the doublet and hose. These things run in cycles. Some time ago it was the "problem play," all gloom and metaphysics. The public wearied of this, and the reaction came in the form of swashbuckling heroes and waving plumes. Now we are in for a vein of light comedies of manners, with sufficient plot to make them stimulating. "The Gay Lord Quex" and "The Tyranny of Tears" have set the fashion. We shall see how widely it is followed.

True, Mr. Alexander promises that his next production at the St. James's will be "Rupert of Hentzau," and Messrs. Harrison and Maude next season will bring forth at the Haymarket Mr. Grundy's adaptation of Dumas' "Black Tulip," while Mrs. Tree will be seen in the autumn in an English version of the latest Parisian success, "Madame De Lavallette," which once again brings before us the times of Napoleon. But these will be mere y the proofs of the exceptions which prove the rule. And, though "Rupert of Hentzau" is Romance pure and simple, both "The Black Tulip" and "Madame De Lavallette" are only set in the days of sword and feather by accident, as it were. They tell plain straightforward stories, simple and dramatic. They are not romantic first and drama afterwards. Were it not that the plots of them demand more troublous times than our own, the schemes of the plays would not suffer were their setting modern. A good story, set in any period, is always welcome; it is only the plays which would not otherwise exist at all were it not as vehicles for the display of gorgeous robes and uniforms which will die with the death of the romantic "boom."

As for Mr. Alexander's "Hentzau," that is almost assured a hearty reception. Rupert is quite a friend of the family. He is a household word; we are all most keen on discovering how he got on after the curtain fell on the last act of "The Prisoner of Zenda." And then we are all on the *qui vive* to make the acquaintance of the new Princess Flavia—we beg her pardon, Queen of Ruritania. The memory of sweet Miss Millard has by no means faded, but we are prepared, all the same, to welcome Miss Fay Davis with open arms. And the gallant Rupert, he is the same. What a pity that he has to die. I am sure we should all like him to marry the queen and be happy ever after. But Fate, in the person of Mr. Anthony Hope, has ordained otherwise, and Mr. Edward Rose, the collaborator with Fate in this particular instance, is too prudent a gentleman to attempt any interference with its decree.

"Great Caesar!" at the Comedy Theatre is well worth going to see by those who like lightness and frivolity. It is a merry entertainment, and the cast is an exceptionally strong one, including Mr. Edouin, Miss Ada Reeve, Miss Decima Moore, and several other clever people. The two ladies, Miss Jennie Owen and Miss Lydia Flopp, who play the American girls, are exceptionally vivacious and pleasing. There are some capital bits of parody and caricature in "Great Caesar!" though it cannot be said that the travestie side of it is kept up with any assiduity. But it is rather fresher and more spontaneous than the average musical comedy we get outside the Gaiety and Daly's—always excepting the astonishing "Belle of New York," of course.

It seems that Mrs. Clifford, the well-known novelist, is to tread fresh woods and pastures new, the woods and pastures of the Drama, where the blossoms are so golden and the grass so nourishing if one picks one's steps carefully. Mrs. Clifford has written a serious play for Mrs. Kendal, on the theme of the man with two lives, which means, of course, that his devotion is given to two women; or, perhaps, devotion goes to one and merely duty to the other. This play Mrs. Kendal is credited with the intention of producing next autumn, which already promises to be so rich in interesting novelties.

PHŒBUS.



QUITE a number of books, calculated to appeal to dwellers in the country, have recently appeared without attracting adequate notice. Among them is the fourth edition of Mr. R. A. Briggs's excellent "Bungalows and Country Residences" (Batsford, 94, High Holborn). He has added, one notes, six additional plates to this series of designs and examples of recently-executed works. As completed, the book appeals to every taste, though possibly not to every purse. Some of the houses, indeed, could only be built by persons of large means, and even so they would be quite out of place in cramped surroundings. What Mr. Briggs can do, when he is given plenty of elbow-room, is best displayed in the charming groups he is going to erect for Sir John

Hall, K.C.M.G., at Riseholme, New Zealand. Most of us, however, would be quite satisfied to live in the house at Sutton, Surrey, which is to be discovered on plate 16. It is a capital specimen of modern domestic architecture—the very thing for a married couple with a comfortable income.

So much for the roof over one's head; now for the garden in which one's feet can wander. Mr. T. W. Sanders, the editor of *Amateur Gardening*, has sent us the third edition of his "Encyclopedia of Gardening" (Collingridge), and an uncommonly useful little book it is. The omissions and defects of previous issues have been carefully looked to. Mr. Sanders is nothing if not scientific, and, therefore, if one wants to know how to grow culliflowers, one has to turn up brassica. But there is much good sense in packing plants of a similar kind within a single article, since the mind instinctively turns from cauliflower to Brussels sprouts, and thence to cabbage. An excellent point, too, is made by insisting on the proper rotation of vegetables, since that economy of natural forces cannot be driven into some gardeners' heads with the heaviest of mallets.

Garden pests are not to be discovered in Mr. Sanders's encyclopædia, so one must seek elsewhere for weapons with which to wage war against the sparrow. Mr. W. B. Tegetmeier provides a regular arsenal of weapons in his little book "The House-Sparrow" (Vinton). Under his instructions, you can harrow their nests with a hook of bent wire; you can catch them in a triangular net; you can set American sparrow traps for them; or you can keep to the efficacious old wicker trap of your youth. Miss Ormerod supplies an appendix on the food of adult sparrows, from which a slight measure of consolation may be derived in the discovery that, in the present month, they only "occasionally" condescend to young pea-pods and leaves of peas, gooseberry blossoms, and young gooseberries. But she regards the sparrow as a complete fraud as a destroyer of insects; its extermination simply means the re-establishment of swallows and martins. Never had an unfortunate bird its character so ruthlessly taken away, as the "avian rat"—to use Mr. Tegetmeier's sub-title—by these two unimpeachable authorities.

A word of regret is due to Mrs. Marshall, whose death was announced too late for comment in last week's "Literary Notes." Her range was not wide, but she had a very large nursery and schoolroom public. One is given to understand that boys are inclined to rise superior to her blends of history and fiction at a somewhat early age; but she knew how to keep her hold upon girls, until they were beginning to leave girlhood behind them. She had little of Mrs. Ewing's insight into child-nature, but her stories ran pleasantly on, and their tone was healthy, without "goody-goodness." Sometimes, as in "Penshurst Castle," she came near excellence, but she wrote too rapidly to leave anything really permanent behind her.

A notable personage of a very different character from the aimably industrious Mrs. Marshall was Sir William White, whose biography is to be written (Messrs. Cassell the publishers) by Mr. Sutherland Edwards. Our late representative at Constantinople was a grim, uncompromising man, who, on that very account, got on excellently with the Turks. The stories of how he obtained his way with Grand Viziers, when his diplomatic colleagues were put off with compliments and empty promises, are endless, and it may be that many of them are apocryphal. At any rate, despite his outward ruggedness, he used to be very kind to the younger members of the Embassy, and his recommendations were wont to carry great weight at the Foreign Office. A good number of letters, such as Mr. Edwards wishes to obtain for the purposes of his biography, should be in existence, since Sir William was a copious correspondent, and a most outspoken one too, when the Cabinet was pulling him one way, and he was trying to go the other.

Mr. Blackburne, the celebrated chess-player, is to be edited, and by a highly-competent authority, in the person of Mr. Anderson Graham. The latter is to supply a biographical introduction, and a history of blindfold chess. Mr. Blackburne will select, annotate, and arrange some 400 of the games in which he has taken part. The collection should be a godsend for long winter evenings, though possibly chess is "off" at the present moment for most of us, except the rigid high priests of the mystery. Mr. Blackburne will give specimens not only of his match and tournament contests, but of "end-play," and of those exhibitions of blindfold and simultaneous play in which he is without a rival. The question, "How is it done?" will still remain unanswered for the ordinary mortal, whose brain is not built in the way of Mr. Blackburne's. Those, however, who make a serious study of chess—and the trifle at chess is worse than the "foozler" at golf—will no doubt spend many hours over his recondite pages.

So Mr. Dooley will pay us a visit. A genuine humourist is always welcome, even when he requires much thought for his elucidation, as is undoubtedly the case with Mr. Dunne in his ultra-Chicago-Hibernian passages. I hear that the English Mr. Dooley, Mr. Miggs of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, is about to publish with Messrs. Sampson Low and Co. a selection of the papers on current topics which he has contributed to that journal. One will be curious to see how they read in volume form, but there was obviously "a book in them," as literary advisers say. They are, at any rate, by no means as difficult as Mr. Dooley, since Mr. Miggs rather indicates dialect than throws it in handfuls at your face, after the manner of his American rival. That is the artistic way of going to work, whatever the more laborious schools of Kailyard and slum-novelist may say. In talking of the Kailyard, I am reminded that Mr. Miggs (the author, not the creation) is not a Londoner, but a Scotsman who has done much excellent work for weekly journalism and the reviews.

Lord Northampton has immersed himself in some uncommonly hot water. At the annual dinner of the Northampton district of the Institute of Journalists, he uttered a prolonged moan over the present condition of literature and the newspaper press. "Wit and humour," according to him, "seem to have utterly departed." With all due respect to Lord Northampton, his ideas seem to be founded upon a very cursory examination of current books and papers. An account of the humorous in contemporary literature can hardly be attempted in a brief column of "Literary Notes," so let us confine ourselves to journalism. Is it not the case that the clever "middle," as the non-political sketch or essay is professionally called, meets with a very strong demand from editors who know their public? The "Dolly Dialogues" have given birth to a host of imitations, all of which are readable, though none of them may have attained to Mr. Anthony Hope's level. Mr. H. G. Wells began as a writer of "middles," though he has gone on to more exacting exercises of fancy. There is, at any rate, a school of ladies who turn out, one week after another, work that should satisfy even the highly-developed critical faculty of Lord Northampton. Mrs. Hinkson, Miss Nesbit, Mrs. Neish, Miss Evelyn Sharp, Mrs. Dew-Smith, Miss Frances Forbes-Robertson, are some obvious names; but we might add to the list almost indefinitely. Yet a generation ago Mrs. Lynn Linton was about the only representative of this class

of periodical humourist, though, no doubt, a powerful one. No; Lord Northampton must really get over his fit of the literary blues.

Everyone interested in the Soudan has been asking when Charles Neufeld's experiences at the hands of the Khalifa were to be made public. He had, it will be remembered, an even more dismal imprisonment than Slatin Pasha or Father Ohrwalder. They did escape; he remained a captive from early in 1887, when his caravan was captured by the Dervishes through the treachery of a guide, until the fall of Khartoum last year. During these weary years he became acquainted with the inside of the terrible Saier Prison; he was forced to manufacture gunpowder for the Dervishes, to extract gold from quartz for them, and to design the Mahdi's tomb. I hear that the serial rights of Mr. Neufeld's adventures have been secured by the *Wide World Magazine*, and that the first instalment of the narrative, which will be continued monthly, will appear in the June number, published on May 22nd. Sir George Newnes, whose advice the poor fellow frequently sought in Cairo, will publish a "Personal Impression" of the author, by way of preface to his narrative, which is to be entitled "In the Khalifa's Clutches, or My Twelve Years' Captivity in Chains in Omdurman." The story will be illustrated by plans, photographs, and drawings by Mr. Charles M. Sheldon, the well-known war artist.

Another adventurer, Master Harry Steel Morrison, found things made much easier for him by kindness than they were for Mr. Neufeld. He it was, you may remember, who was granted an audience by the Queen at the time of the Jubilee. He also "bagged" President Faure by smuggling himself into the Elysée under a false name. Master Morrison has told his story in an unaffected and honest fashion in "A Yankee Boy's Success," of which Messrs. George Newnes are the English publishers. Some of his impressions necessarily provoke a smile, but he spoke up like a man to the Queen, and received from Mr. Gladstone the excellent advice to be careful that his ambition did not run away with him. In these days of Jaggers-Dunkin booms, it is just as well that youthful prodigies should not get their heads turned.

Books to order from the library:—

- "A Thousand Days in the Arctic." F. G. Jackson. (Harpers.)
- "The Kingdom of the Barotsi." Alfred Bertrand. (Fisher Unwin.)
- "Intimate China." Mrs. Archibald Little. (Hutchinson.)
- "Memoir of H. G. Liddell, D.D." Rev. H. L. Thompson. (Murray.)
- "Tales of Nouthumbria." Howard Pease. (Methuen.)

LOOKER-ON.



It cannot truthfully be said that the Newmarket Second Spring Meeting has given us much food for reflection, so far as its racing went. Its main feature of interest was, of course, the appearance of Frontier in the Newmarket Stakes on Wednesday. On the strength of his performance in Flying Fox's trial at Kingsclere, he was naturally fancied by the followers of the stable, though, as I have often pointed out in these notes, Flying Fox won that gallop so easily that it did not say much for any of those who finished behind him, creditably as some of them have run since. Again, Lord William Beresford and Huggins must have had some sort of an idea, through Caiman, of what chance Dominie II. had of beating the Duke of Westminster's colt, and that they fancied him is proved by the fact that he started favourite at 9 to 4. Frontier came next in the market, though in the race he was not only unable to beat the American colt, but also finished behind both Kent and Harrow.

This unexpected result was naturally hailed with delight by the enemies of Flying Fox, though, as a matter of fact, it makes that colt's Epsom chance neither better nor worse than it was before, especially as his reputation rests more on what he did with Trident in the Two Thousand Guineas than on any private performance of his. Neither am I certain that Frontier's form in this race was absolutely correct, and he might have run very differently had he raced with horses instead of being kept away wide by himself. However, of this more anon. The most interesting event of the first day was the Somerville Stakes for two year olds, for which the speedy Styria, and the Kempton Park winner, Emotion, started first and second favourites, at 6 to 5 and 5 to 4 respectively, the last-named, of course, carrying 7lb. extra for her previous week's victory. Emotion was again very quick in getting into her stride, but whereas at Kempton Park she increased her lead the further they went, she was on this occasion unable to get out of the way of Sonatura, who was galloping over her from the Dip, and, closing with her at the distance, beat her in a canter by four lengths.

The winner was carrying a 7lb. penalty for winning the First Spring Two Year Old Stakes at the previous meeting, and unless Emotion was still feeling the effects of her Kempton Park exertions, it makes the form of that race look very moderate. Caiman, of whom I do not think we have as yet seen the best, walked over for the Burwell Stakes; and Lord William Beresford's light blue jacket was again to the fore on Grodno, who, in the hands of Sloan, gave St. Fort a four lengths' beating in the Newmarket Handicap. Among the beaten lot were Tophet and Tarbolton, the latter of whom it was who had taken down Calvey's number at Kempton Park on the previous Friday. On that occasion Grodno was giving Tarbolton 15lb., whereas they now met at even weights, and I think the former is certainly useful in this class of race.

On Wednesday we had the Newmarket Stakes, to which allusion has been already made. Dominie II., who is by Sensation—Dolores, and was bred in America, is hardly a taking horse, though a fine mover, and, running very stoutly home, he beat Kent by three-parts of a length, with Harrow, who once looked like winning, half a length behind the second. Kent, who is a big, fine, slashing chestnut colt, by Kendal out of Adornment, looks like making more than the ordinary amount of improvement, and may be a better horse by the St. Leger time; whilst the neat little Harrow, as usual, ran well, though unable to stall off his bigger and longer-striding opponents at the finish. Frontier finished fourth and St. Gris fifth, and if this running were correct there is not much to choose between these two. Considering the very wide difference that there must be between Flying Fox and Frontier, this makes one wonder more than ever at the extraordinary fluke which alone can have enabled St. Gris to beat the first and best of these at Kempton Park last year. There was no other even of any interest or importance on this day, and it is doubtful if this year's

Newmarket Stakes winner will ever rank with such previous winners as Donovan, Memoir, Isinglass, Ladas, Galtee More, and Cyllene.

The Payne Stakes, which has at different times been won by some fair-class three year olds, and last year went to the Duke of Westminster's unlucky colt, Batt, brought out only five runners on Thursday last. Among these was the Two Thousand Guineas second, Caiman, and, the opposition being very weak, he started favourite at 6 to 1 on. From start to finish he was always winning his race, and on Fly Footpad II. went after him, when he had pulled his way to the front coming out of the Abingdon Mile Bottom. Among the twelve runners for the Bedford Two Year Old Plate were O'Donovan Rossa, who had been first beaten by Chevening at Chester, and Democrat, who had run second to Emotion at Kempton Park. These two started first and second favourites, and, after a desperate finish between the pair, the first-named, ridden by Madden, got home a head in front of Lord William Beresford's colt, who was, of course, steered by Sloan.

Berzak, who won the Alexandra Handicap at Gatwick on Friday, has had a somewhat checkered career. He is an American-bred five year old by Sensation—Belphebe, and did good service for Mr. Lorillard as a two year old. As a three he ran fourth to Galtee More in the Two Thousand, and second to the same colt in the Newmarket Stakes, after which he became difficult to train. He last year won a race at Newmarket, after being unplaced in the Jubilee Stakes and Royal Hunt Cup, and his only appearance this season previous to last Friday's victory was when he finished second to Newhaven II. in the March Stakes. He won somewhat cleverly at Gatwick, and will be worth following in races of this class. Indeed, it is hardly ever safe to oppose Lord William Beresford's colours just now, and Huggins has certainly done wonders with some of the horses under his charge.

Perhaps the principal feature of the Newmarket Meeting was the riding of Sloan, who has never been seen to greater advantage in this country than he was last week; and whatever may be said as to the merits or demerits of his style of riding, there is no doubt that he is doing our jockeys a vast deal of good in showing up the folly of waiting behind and riding against each other, instead of going along and winning their races. A very improving sort of colt, whose career will be worth watching, is Kent, who was bred by Mr. J. E. Platt, and who looks like making a great four year old; whilst another of the same age who will pay for following is My Boy, by Marcion—Marchioness. I remember this colt as a very fine youngster amongst Sir Tatton Sykes's yearlings in 1897, and although not in the very first class, he will always be useful. It is interesting at this moment, when Flying Fox has just won the Two Thousand Guineas, and is an odds-on favourite for the Derby, to hear that his grandam, Lily Agnes, has lately been shot, at the age of twenty-eight. This celebrated mare, who was a very good performer on the turf—she won twenty-one races out of thirty-two—and a capital stayer, was bred by Mr. James Snarry in 1871. After three years of stud life at Musley Bank she passed into the possession of the Duke of Westminster, for whom in 1883 she bred the mighty Ormonde, sire of Orme, sire of Flying Fox. She belonged to the No. 16 family, and is now being well represented at the stud by her daughter Ornament, also by Bend Or.

OUTPOST.

SHOOTING GOSSIP.

ON Saturday last a very interesting contest in clay-bird shooting took place on the ground of the Surrey County Gun Club, at Wimbledon Park, between a team of eight members of that club and eight of the members of the Middlesex Gun Club, for possession of the Inanimate Bird-Shooting Association's Inter-Club Cup. These are the two crack clubs in the clay-bird shooting world, and in the contest between the picked shots of each on Saturday the pastime was to be seen at its best. The Surrey Club ground is very prettily situated, and excellently laid out and appointed. It lies between Wimbledon Lake and the railway, within five minutes' walk of Wimbledon Park Station, and numbers among its members some of the finest trap shots in England. The Middlesex is an equally strong club, and, having challenged the Surrey for possession of the club trophy, had to shoot that club on its ground. There was a large attendance of the members of both clubs to witness the shooting, and on the seats in front of the pavilion were a considerable number of the gentler sex, who seemed keenly interested in the proceedings. Inanimate bird shooting has at least one advantage over live pigeon practice, in that the most tender-hearted of her sex can view it without a qualm. The Surrey men went in first. Each of the Surrey eight had to shoot at twenty birds down the line, and the highest possible score therefore was 160. It was a beautiful afternoon, with very little breeze blowing to disturb the flight of the birds, and the score rapidly mounted up as round after round was fired. Better team shooting at clays was never seen than that of the Surrey men, who accounted for 143 out of 160 birds, or nearly an average of eighteen out of each twenty birds fired at. The score-sheet showed that Mr. Whittaker had registered the highest possible figure of 20, never having missed his bird; Messrs. Turner and Back only missed one bird each out of their twenty; while Messrs. O'Connor, Catmur, and Payne were credited with 18 each, Mr. Harris 16, and Captain Garnett 15, making a score of 143 in all, a total that there was thought to be small chance of the Middlesex team beating. That team, however, set to work very bravely, and for a time looked like gaining a victory, only missing one bird out of the first thirty fired at. Shooting steadily on, they tied the Surrey score on the first half of the birds shot at, but during the second half the strain began to tell on one or two members of the team, who missed several birds in succession, reducing the average scores below that of their opponents. The contest then grew very exciting, for it became known that only by recording full scores in the last two rounds could the Middlesex Club bear off the trophy. Shot after shot was watched with interest by the spectators, Mr. H. J. Cave, the captain of the team, who is also the holder of the championship of Britain in clay-bird shooting, fighting hard for victory, with never a miss from beginning to end of his shooting, Mr. E. A. Cave, his brother, also recording a full score of kills. But the tail had lost nerve, and several misses in the final round gave victory to the County of Surrey. The Middlesex score-sheet showed a total of only 139, made up as follows, viz., Messrs. H. J. Cave 20, E. A. Cave 20, Brown 18, Butt 18, Williams 18, Leeson 16, Dolley 15, and Yorke 14. And so the Inter-Club Cup still remains in possession of the Surrey County Club, to whom after another victory it will altogether belong.

Very instructive as well as interesting to a shooter was this well-fought match between the two best clay-bird shooting teams that could be selected in

England, to note not only the style of each shooter, but also the gun and ammunition he had selected to shoot with. It was interesting to observe, for instance, that the champion shot, Mr. H. J. Cave, and Mr. Brown, another member of the Middlesex team, shot with single-triggered guns, as did also Mr. Turner, the captain of the Surrey team, and Mr. H. J. Harris, also a member of the Surrey. Two of these guns had been built by Messrs. Boss and Co., one by Mr. Charles Lancaster, and one by Messrs. Westley Richards and Co. The favourite loading with shooters, we found, was 1 1-8oz. of No. 7 shot in the first barrel and the same weight of No. 6 shot in the left, the powder charge being 42gr. of bulk powder or its equivalent. Unlike live pigeon-shooting competitors, the clay-bird cracks evidently prefer bulk to concentrated powders in their cartridge-cases, as do game shooters.

It was also remarked that every member of the Middlesex Club, curiously enough, shot in the same style—guns near the shoulder or on it, and the attitude stiff as on parade; whereas the Surrey team, without exception, shot in the game-shooting style, butt under the elbow until the bird was thrown, with an easier position and quicker time. The Surrey, in fact, shot in prettier style, which we heard explained by the fact that they were all game shots first, and inanimate bird shots after. Their success on Saturday certainly showed that there is no advantage to be gained by keeping the butt of the gun at the shoulder till the signal is given for throwing the bird and the weapon is discharged. It is not a graceful attitude, and though permitted in live pigeon-shooting, should if possible be avoided by crack clay-bird shots in public matches.

NEVIS.



COLLARED DOVES (COLUMBA RISORIA).

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in the letter of M. de Roche in your issue of the 6th inst. For years I had a number of collared doves (*Columba risoria*) in the woods around my garden, but, unfortunately, found that the sparrow-hawk was their greatest enemy. I should much doubt a dove, when pursued by a hawk, trying to lead its pursuer into danger; more probably the former was in hopes of finding shelter within an opened window. I have just set at large six doves which I have kept all through the winter, and they are as tame as possible. They come to call, settle on my shoulder, and show no signs of fear. I often wonder that more people do not keep these delightful pets. For years my birds used to keep us company when having afternoon tea in the garden. They would appropriate a cake and delight in pecking out the raisins. I once found a fine sparrow-hawk stunned in my dining-room. He had evidently made a dash at a cage full of canaries, and injured himself by coming in contact with the half-opened window.—OBSERVER.

PET TERRIERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you by post to-day a photograph of my three pet dogs and constant companions, Venus, Vic, and Mike, which you may think worth inserting in COUNTRY LIFE. Their position together is perfectly natural,



Rayne, LADY HOWARD'S PETS. Maldon, Essex.

as they are all three devoted to each other and to their mistress. I have had them from a few weeks' old, and they all but talk, and understand everything said to them.—ALICE HOWARD.

A STRAYING FALCON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much pleased to read Mr. Upcher's letter in your issue of the 13th inst., and feel that such forbearance and thought for the sport of others should not pass unnoticed. I am sure the owner of the falcon, whosoever he be, cannot but feel deeply grateful to Mr. Upcher for not having had her destroyed, and this in spite of the fact that she has been doing serious damage. For in these days, so-called "sportsmen" are far too ready to be intolerant of the sport of others, if it in any way clash with their own. The loss of a falcon, if properly trained, is no light one, as those who have experienced it can testify. For it is not only the loss of much training and labour, but often of a great favourite. It may be well here to note that the length of time that may elapse before a hawk be reclaimed is often considerable. A friend last season lost a falcon, and after the space of twenty-seven weeks recovered her in perfect health and condition.—ASTUR.

WATER-DIVINERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have had a very good trial of a water-diviner's skill in finding water in a dry country. He showed me all the spots where water could be found by digging on the top of a plateau behind my house, and gave me the approximate depth of the springs. He marked several places, and finally chose one which appeared to be in a suitable position. After digging to his calculated depth the water did not appear. I became sceptical, and was about to give up digging and cut my loss, as they say on the Stock Exchange. He, however, persuaded me to persevere, and offered to share the expenses of further diggings. For a few feet more he made a borehole 3in. in diameter, and finally found a strong spring from which water is pumped by a very efficient and inexpensive windmill into a reservoir and thence falls at high pressure all over my premises. The expense of all the work was not great in proportion to the results. He performed all his divining in the presence of several people, more or less unbelievers, who are all now quite converted. I will be happy to supply name and address of diviner and rough cost of work to anybody desiring such information through the Editor of COUNTRY LIFE.—L. T., Salop.

A CURIOUS FIND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A hawk had been troublesome to the gamekeepers on my father's property in Norfolk, and being watched to its nest, was shot and the nest taken, when it was noticed that a piece of paper had been woven into the nest. Being an unusual occurrence, the nest was pulled to pieces, and a letter was found, closed, but without a stamp. It had been written by the guard of a train to a friend on the railway, and had probably been blown out of a passing train, but how the hawk came to make use of it cannot be explained, as the nearest railway line is three miles away. Enquiries were made for the man to whom the note was directed, and it was found that he was dead, a funny coincidence being that his name was Hawke. As the note was of no importance, it has been kept as a curiosity.—L. R.

[Kites always carry odds and ends of what they consider ornament to their nests. Among other things pages of "Badshaw" have been found in them.—ED.]

TYPES OF POLO PONIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There is probably little real difference of opinion between your correspondent and myself as to the qualities of polo ponies. Certainly there is none as to the desirability of establishing a type and keeping to it. But then the question arises, which type are we to choose?—there are so many. I have been thinking over the views suggested by your representative at Dublin, and while in the main I agree with them in theory, in practice there seem to be difficulties in the way of carrying them out. With this in my mind, I took particular notice of the ponies playing at Ranelagh on Saturday last. There were two matches played, and it so happened that some of the best ponies, both in looks and performances, were on the ground. First there was Mr. J. Dryborough's Charlton, which in every respect fulfils the requirements of polo. This mare would be the type I should choose to work for, and for the moment it seemed as though the question was settled; but then in the same game Mr. Wise was playing a chestnut new to the game, which attracted the notice of some first-rate judges. She, however, was of quite another type, being a long, raking mare, but seemingly able to turn quickly, and without doubt going a great pace. Then Lord Kensington rode his two famous ponies, Sailor and Fizzer, both first-rate ponies, yet certainly not of the same pattern. Mr. Tresham Gilbey had The Spinster, a compact, thick bay mare that played like a book, but he had also a dun, long-backed, and altogether a different sort, but nearly as good in the game. Again, Lord Shrewsbury was riding some racing-looking ponies quite diverse from any of the others. Yet all these were first-class polo ponies, and three—Sailor, Charlton, and Early Dawn—have won prizes under the best polo pony judges of the day. The only conclusions I can arrive at is that the idea of a type must be given up, and that we must reconcile ourselves to a certain undeniable minimum of qualifications which I sketched in my former letter. In talking the matter over with one of the chief breeders and most successful exhibitors of horses of the day, he gave it as his opinion that any type can be produced by the necessary expenditure of time and money, but when so many and various types answer the purpose required, is it worth while to aim at such an ideal? Certain qualities, e.g., good shoulders, galloping quarters, and docility a polo pony must have; is it wise to look beyond this, considering the difficulties of finding and of breeding this animal?—T. F. D.

JERSEY COW SHEDDING TEETH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—One of my Jersey cows is losing her teeth. Can you tell me if this is unusual, or suggest any cause for it? She is quite a young thing, having had her first calf last June. She eats well, carries a fair coat for the time of year, and shows no sign of being in bad health. The teeth—three double ones—we have found in her manger are not decayed, but have apparently broken off at the root. I should be so glad if someone could throw a light on the subject or advise me what to do.—PUZZLED.

[It is quite probable that the cow is losing her first teeth. They often shed these late, after they have had their first calf.—ED.]

SMOKELESS POWDERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Our attention has been called to an article which appeared in your issue of the 6th inst. with reference to a combination of all the manufacturers of well-known smokeless powders, formed to protect their interest against the business methods of a prominent firm of cartridge-case makers in Birmingham, in which you say: "These combined manufacturers decided to decline supplying the case-makers with their explosives, unless the latter undertook to give up the manufacture of nitro-compounds altogether." We beg to inform you that this is not a correct version of the point at issue between us, as we should not think of dictating to any firm as to what they were to manufacture. Our reason for declining to supply them with any of our smokeless powders is because they have announced their intention to sell cartridges loaded with their own powder at a lower price than cartridges loaded with ours. We do not think comment is necessary on this, and shall be much obliged if you will correct the error in your next issue. We are, Sir, your obedient servants,

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H. Baldwin, Secretary.